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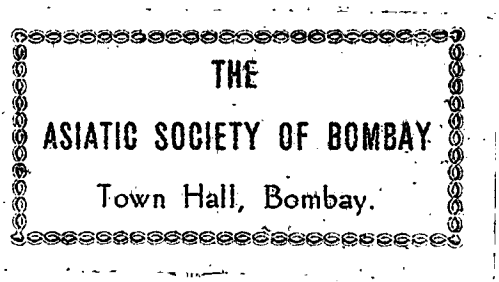

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Boswell's Life of Johnson

VOL. I

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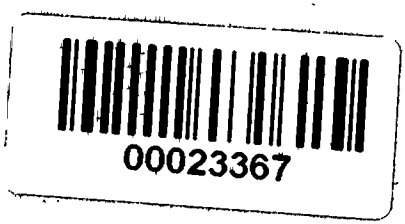

PREFACE

TO

THIS EDITION.

It were superfluous to expatiate on the merits, at least as a source of amusement, of Boswell's LIFE OF JOHNSON. Whatever doubts may have existed as to the prudence or the propriety of the *original* publication—however naturally private confidence was alarmed, or individual vanity offended, the voices of criticism and complaint were soon drowned in the general applause. And no wonder—the work combines within itself the four most entertaining classes of writing—biography, memoirs, familiar letters, and that assemblage of literary anecdotes which the French have taught us to distinguish by the termination *Ana*.

It was originally received with an eagerness and relished with a zest which undoubtedly were sharpened by the curiosity which the unexpected publication of the words and deeds of so many persons still living could not but excite. But this motive has gradually become weaker, and may now be said to be extinct; yet we do not find that the popularity of the work, though somewhat changed in quality, is really diminished; and as the interval which separates us from the actual time and scene

increases, so appear to increase the interest and delight which we feel at being introduced, as it were, into that distinguished society of which Dr. Johnson formed the centre, and of which his biographer is the historian.

But though every year thus adds something to the interest and instruction which this work affords, something is, on the other hand, deducted from the amusement which it gives, by the gradual obscurity that time throws over the persons and incidents of private life: many circumstances known to all the world when Mr. Boswell wrote are already obscure to the best informed, and wholly forgotten by the rest of mankind [1].

For instance, when he relates (vol. i. p. 196.) that a "great personage" called the English Divines of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries "*Giants*," we guess that George III. was the great personage; but all the editor's inquiries (and some of His Majesty's illustrious family have condescended to permit these inquiries to extend even to them) have failed to ascertain to what person or on what occasion that happy expression was used.

Again: When Mr. Boswell's capricious delicacy induced him to suppress names and to substitute such descriptions as "an eminent friend," "a young gen-

[1] "Dr. Johnson talked with approbation of an intended edition of the *Spectator*, with notes. He observed that all works which describe manners *require notes* in sixty or seventy years or less." *Post*, v. ii. p. 200. And Dean Swift wrote to Pope on the subject of the Dunciad, "I could wish the notes to be very large in what relates to the persons concerned; for I have long observed that twenty miles from London nobody understands hints, initial letters, or town facts or passages, and *in a few years* not even those who live in London." *Lett.* 16. *July*, 1728.—Ed.

biography of Johnson: as this is, as far as the editor knows, a novel attempt, and as it must give his work somewhat of a confused and heterogeneous appearance, he thinks it necessary to state some of the reasons which induced him to adopt so unusual a course.

The first and most cogent is the authority of Mr. Boswell himself; who in his original edition inserted, and in his subsequent editions continued to add, letters, memoranda[1], notes, and anecdotes collected from every quarter; but the appearance of his work was so long delayed, that Sir John Hawkins, Mrs. Piozzi, Dr. Strahan, Mr. Tyers, Mr. Nichols, and many others, had anticipated much of what he would have been glad to tell. Some squabbles about copyright had warned him that he must not avail himself of their publications[2]; and he was on such bad terms with his rival biographers that he could not expect any assistance or countenance from them. He nevertheless went as far as he thought the law would allow in making frequent quotations from the preceding publications: but as to all the rest, which he did not venture to appropriate to his own use,

[1] On the use of this Latinism, the editor ventures to repeat a pleasant anecdote told by the Bishop of Ferns. The late Lord Avonmore giving evidence relative to certain certificates of degrees in the University of Dublin, called them (as they are commonly called) "*Testimonihums*." As the clerk was writing down the word, one of the counsel said, "Should it not be rather *testimonia*?" "Yes," replied Lord Avonmore, "if you think it *better English*!" This pleasantry contains a just grammatical criticism; but *memoranda* has of late been so generally used as an English plural that the editor has ventured to retain it.—Ed.

[2] It is a curious proof of these jealousies, that Mr. Boswell entered at Stationers' Hall as distinct publications, *Dr. Johnson's letter to Lord Chesterfield*, and the account of his *Conversation with George III.*, which occupy a few pages of the Life.—Ed.

—*the grapes were sour*—and he took every opportunity of representing the anecdotes of his rivals as extremely inaccurate and generally undeserving of credit.

It is certain that none of them have attained—indeed they do not pretend to—that extreme verbal accuracy with which Mr. Boswell had, by great zeal and diligence, learned to record conversations; nor in the details of facts are they so precise as Mr. Boswell with good reason claims to be.

Mr. Boswell took, indeed, extraordinary and most laudable pains to attain accuracy[1]. Not only did he commit to paper at night the conversation of the day, but even in general society he would occasionally take a note of any thing remarkable that occurred; and he afterwards spared no trouble in arranging and supplying the inevitable deficiencies of these hasty memoranda.

[1] Mr. Wordsworth has obligingly furnished the editor with the following copy of a note in a blank page of his copy of Boswell's work, dictated and signed in Mr. Wordsworth's presence by the late Sir George Beaumont, whose own accuracy was exemplary, and who lived very much in the society of Johnson's latter days.

"*Rydal Mount, 12th Sept.* 1826.

"*Sir Joshua Reynolds told me at his table, immediately after the publication of this book, that every word of it might be depended upon as if given on oath. Boswell was in the habit of bringing the proof sheets to his house previously to their being struck off, and if any of the company happened to have been present at the conversation recorded, he requested him or them to correct any error, and not satisfied with this, he would run over all London for the sake of verifying any single word which might be disputed.*

"*G. H. BEAUMONT.*"

Although it cannot escape notice, that Sir Joshua is here reported to have drawn a somewhat wider inference than the premises warranted, the general testimony is satisfactory, and it is to a considerable extent corroborated by every kind of evidence external and internal.—Ed.

But, after all, Mr. Boswell himself is not exempt from those errors—

—— quas aut incuria fudit,
Aut humana parum cavit natura;

and an attentive examination and collation of the authorities (and particularly of Mr. Boswell's own) have convinced the editor that the minor biographers are entitled not merely to more credit than Mr. Boswell allows them, but to as much as any person writing from recollection, and not from notes made at the moment, can be.

As Mr. Boswell had borrowed *much* from Sir J. Hawkins and Mrs. Piozzi, the editor has thought himself justified in borrowing *more*; and he has therefore (as he thinks Mr. Boswell would have done if he could) incorporated with the text nearly the whole of Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes*, and such passages of Hawkins' "*Life*" and "*Collection of anecdotes*" as relate to circumstances which Mr. Boswell had either not mentioned at all, or touched upon imperfectly.

The same use has been made of several other publications, particularly Murphy's Essay on the Life of Dr. Johnson, Mr. Tyers' eccentric but amusing Sketch, and Mr. Nichols' contributions to the Gentleman's Magazine, a publication which, under that gentleman's superintendence, was of peculiar authority in all that relates to Dr. Johnson.

The editor had another important object in adopting this incorporation. Notwithstanding the diligence and minuteness with which Mr. Boswell detailed *what he saw* of Dr. Johnson's life, his work

left large chasms. It must be recollected that they never *resided* in the same neighbourhood, and that the *detailed* account of Johnson's domestic life and conversation is limited to the opportunities afforded by Mr. Boswell's occasional visits to London—by the Scottish Tour—and by one meeting at Dr. Taylor's in Derbyshire. Of above *twenty years*, therefore, that their acquaintance lasted, periods equivalent in the whole to about three-quarters of a year only fell under the personal notice of *Boswell*—and thus has been left many a long *hiatus—valde deflendus*, but now, alas, quite irreparable!

Mr. Boswell endeavoured, indeed, to fill up these chasms as well as he could with Johnson's *letters* to his absent friends; but much the largest, and, for this purpose, the most valuable part of his correspondence was out of his reach, namely, that which Dr. Johnson for twenty years maintained with Mrs. Thrale, and which she published in 1788, in two volumes octavo. For the copyright of these, Mr. Boswell says, in a tone of admiring envy, "she received five hundred pounds." The publication, however, was not very successful—it never reached a second edition, and is now almost forgotten. But

* It appears from the Life, that Mr. Boswell visited England a dozen times during his acquaintance with Dr. Johnson, and that the number of days on which they met were about 180, to which is to be added the time of the Tour, during which they met daily from the 18th August, to the 22d November, 1773; in the whole about 276 days. The number of pages in the late editions of the two works is 2926, of which, 1320 are occupied by the history of these 276 days; so that *little less than an hundredth part* of Dr. Johnson's life occupies *above one half* of Mr. Boswell's works. Every one must regret that his personal intercourse with his great friend was not more frequent or more continued; but the editor could do but little towards rectifying this disproportion, except by the insertion of the correspondence with Mrs. Thrale.—Ed.

through these letters are scattered almost the only information we have relative to Johnson during the long intervals between Mr. Boswell's visits; and from them he has occasionally but cautiously (having the fear of the copyright law before his eyes) made interesting extracts.

These letters being now public property, the editor has been at liberty to follow up Mr. Boswell's imperfect example, and he has therefore made numerous and copious selections from them, less as specimens of Johnson's talents for letter-writing, than as notices of his domestic and social life during the intervals of Mr. Boswell's narrative. Indeed, as *letters*, few of Johnson's can have any great charm for the common reader: they are full of good sense and good nature, but in forms too didactic and ponderous to be very amusing. If the editor could have ventured to make so great an alteration in Mr. Boswell's original plan, he would—instead of adding so many letters[1]—have been inclined to have omitted all, except those which might be remarkable for some peculiar merit, or which might tend to complete the history of Johnson's life. In the large extracts which have been made from Mrs. Thrale's correspondence, he has been guided entirely by this latter object.

The most important addition, however, which the editor has made is one that needs no apology—he has incorporated with the LIFE the whole of the TOUR TO THE HEBRIDES, which Mr. Boswell published in

[1] The number of *original* letters in this edition is about 100—the number of those collected from various publications (including the extracts from Mrs. Piozzi's) is about 200.—ED.

one volume in 1785, and which, no doubt, if he could legally have done so, he would himself have incorporated in the LIFE—of which indeed he expressly tells us, he looks on the TOUR but as a *portion*. It is only wonderful, that since the copyright has expired, any edition of the life of Johnson should have been published without the addition of this, the most original, curious, and amusing portion of the whole biography.

The *Prayers and Meditations*, published with rather too much haste after Johnson's death by Dr. Strahan, have also been made use of to an extent which was forbidden to Mr. Boswell. What Dr. Strahan calls *meditations*[1] are, in fact, nothing but *diaries* of the author's moral and religious state of mind, intermixed with some notices of his bodily health and of the interior circumstances of his domestic life. Mr. Boswell had ventured to quote *some* of these: the pre-

[1] These *Meditations* have been the cause of much ridicule and some obloquy, which would be not wholly undeserved if it were true, as Dr. Strahan thoughtlessly gave the world to suppose, that they were *arranged* by Dr. Johnson, and delivered to Dr. Strahan for the *express purpose of publication*. An inspection of the original manuscripts (now properly and fortunately lodged in Pembroke College) has convinced the editor, (and, as he is glad to find, every body else who has examined them), that the opinion derived from Dr. Strahan's statement echoed by Mr. Boswell, is wholly unfounded. In the confusion of a mind which the approach of death was beginning to affect, and in the agitation which a recent attempt to spoliate two of his note books had occasioned, Dr. Johnson seems to have given Dr. Strahan a confused bundle of loose papers—scraps, half-sheets, and a few leaves stitched together. The greater part of these papers were the *Prayers*, the publication of which, no doubt, (*for Dr. Strahan says so*) Dr. Johnson sanctioned; but mixed with them were those *diaries* to which it is probable that Dr. Johnson did not advert, and which there is every reason to suppose he never could have intended to submit to any human eye but his own. Well understood, as the secret confessions of his own contrite conscience, they do honour to Dr. Johnson's purity and piety; but very different would be their character, if it appeared that he had ostentatiously prepared them for the press. See more on this subject in the notes, vol. i. p. 213, and vol. v. p. 269.—ED.

sent edition contains *all* that appear to offer any thing of interest.

The editor has also incorporated in this work a small volume, published in 1802, but now become scarce, containing an *Account of Dr. Johnson's early life, written by himself*, and a curious correspondence with Miss Boothby, of which Mr. Boswell had given one, and Mrs. Piozzi three or four letters[1].

Mr. Duppa published in 1806, with copious explanatory notes, a diary which Johnson had kept during a *Tour through North Wales*, made in 1775, in company with Mr. Thrale and his family. Mr. Boswell had, it appears, inquired in vain for this diary: if he could have obtained it, he would, no doubt, have inserted it, as he did the similar notes of the *Tour in France* in the succeeding year. By the liberality of Mr. Duppa, the editor has been enabled to incorporate this volume with the present edition.

The editor will now recapitulate the *publications* which will be found, in the *whole* or in *part*, in the five volumes of the present edition.

1. The whole of Mr. Malone's edition of Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, 4 vols. 8vo.

2. The whole of the first and most copious[2] edition of Boswell's *Tour to the Hebrides*, 1 vol. 8vo.

3. The whole (though differently arranged) of Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson*, 1 vol. sm. 8vo.

4. The whole of Dr. Johnson's *Tour in Wales*, with notes, by R. Duppa, Esq., 1 vol. 12mo.

[1] This correspondence will be found in the Appendix to vol. iv.—Ed.

[2] Mr. Boswell, in his subsequent editions, omitted some and softened down other passages, which, the reason for the alterations having gone by, are restored. —Ed.

5. The whole of an *Account of the early Life of Dr. Johnson, with his correspondence with Miss Boothby*, 1 vol. 16mo.

6. A great portion of the *Letters to and from Dr. Johnson*, published by H. L. Piozzi, 2 vols. 8vo.

7. Large extracts from The *Life of Dr. Johnson*, by Sir J. Hawkins, 1 vol. 8vo.

8. All, that had not been already anticipated by Mr. Boswell or Mrs. Piozzi, of the "*Apophthegms, Sentiments, and Opinions of Dr. Johnson*," published by Sir J. Hawkins, in his edition of Johnson's works.

9. Extracts from *Sketches of Dr. Johnson*, by Thomas Tyers, Esq., a pamphlet, in 8vo.

10. Extracts from Murphy's *Essay on the Life of Dr. Johnson*, from Mr. Nichols' and Mr. Stevens' contributions to the *Gentleman's* and *London Magazines*, and from the *Lives* and *Memoirs* of Cumberland, Cradock, Miss Hawkins, Lord Charlemont, the Wartons, and other friends and acquaintances of Dr. Johnson.

11. The whole of a *Poetical Review of the Character of Dr. Johnson*, by John Courtenay, Esq. in 4to.

But besides these *printed* materials, the editor has been favoured with many *papers* connected with Dr. Johnson, his life, and society, hitherto unpublished. Of course, his first inquiries were directed towards the original manuscript of Mr. Boswell's Journal, which would no doubt have enabled him to fill up all the blanks and clear away much of the obscurity that exist in the printed LIFE. It was to be hoped that the *archives of Auchinleck*, which Mr. Boswell frequently and pompously mentions,

would contain the original materials of these works, which he himself, as well as the world at large, considered as his best claims to distinction. And the editor thought that he was only fulfilling the duties of courtesy in requesting from Mr. Boswell's representative any information which he might be disposed to afford on the subject. To that request the editor has never received any answer: though the same inquiry was afterwards, on his behalf, repeated by Sir Walter Scott, whose influence might have been expected to have produced a more satisfactory result.[1]

But the editor was more fortunate in other quarters. The Reverend Doctor Hall, Master of Pembroke College, was so good as to collate the printed copy of the *Prayers and Meditations* with the original papers, now (most appropriately) deposited in the library of that college, and some, not unimportant, light has been thrown on that publication by the personal inspection of the papers which he permitted the editor to make.

Doctor Hall has also elucidated some facts and corrected some misstatements in Mr. Boswell's account of Johnson's earlier life, by an examination of the college records; and he has found some of Johnson's college exercises, one or two specimens of which have been selected as likely to interest the classical reader. He has also been so obliging as to select and copy

[1] Sir Walter Scott and Sir James Boswell, to whom, as the grandson of Mr. Boswell, the inquiries were addressed, unfortunately missed one another in mutual calls; but the editor has heard from another quarter that the original journals do not exist at Auchinleck: perhaps to this fact the silence of Sir James Boswell may be attributed. The manuscript of the TOUR was, it is known, fairly transcribed, and so, probably, were *portions* of the LIFE; but it appears from a memorandum book and other papers in Mr. Anderdon's possession, that Mr. Boswell's materials were in a variety of forms; and it is feared that they have been irretrievably dispersed.—ED.

several letters written by Dr. Johnson to his early and constant friends, the daughters of Sir Thomas Aston, which, having fallen into the hands of Mrs. Parker, were by her son, the Reverend S. H. Parker, presented to Pembroke College. The papers derived from this source are marked *Pemb. MSS.* Dr. Hall, feeling a fraternal interest in the most illustrious of the sons of *Pembroke*, has continued, as will appear in the course of the work, to favour the editor with his valuable assistance.

The Reverend Dr. Harwood, the historian of Lichfield, procured for the editor, through the favour of Mrs. Pearson, the widow of the legatee of Miss Lucy Porter, many letters addressed to this lady by Dr. Johnson; for which, it seems, Mr. Boswell had inquired in vain. These papers are marked *Pearson MSS.* Dr. Harwood supplied also some other papers, and much information collected by himself [1].

Lord Rokeby, the nephew and heir of Mrs. Montagu, has been so kind as to communicate Dr. Johnson's letters to that lady.

Mr. Langton, the grandson of Mr. Bennet Langton, has furnished the editor with some of his grandfather's papers, and several original MSS. of Dr. Johnson's Latin poetry, which have enabled the editor to explain some errors and obscurities in the published copies of those compositions.

Mr. J. F. Palmer, the grand-nephew of Sir Joshua Reynolds and of Miss Reynolds, has most liberally

[1] Dr. Harwood has also favoured the editor with permission to engrave, for this edition, the earliest known portrait of Dr. Johnson—a minature worn in a bracelet by his wife, which Dr. Harwood purchased from Francis Barber, Dr. Johnson's servant and legatee. In the engraving, the original is by *mistake* stated to be "in the possession of Mrs. Pearson." It belongs to Dr. Harwood.—ED.

communicated all the papers of that lady, containing a number of letters or rather notes of Dr. Johnson to her, which, however trivial in themselves, tend to corroborate all that the biographers have stated of the charity and kindness of his private life. Mr. Palmer has also contributed a paper of more importance—a MS. of about seventy pages, written by Miss Reynolds, and entitled *Recollections of Dr. Johnson*[1]. The authenticity and general accuracy of these *Recollections* cannot be doubted, and the editor has therefore admitted extracts from them into the text; but as he did not receive the paper till a great portion of the work had been printed, he has given the parts which he could not incorporate with the text, in the general appendix.

Mr. Markland has, as the reader will, in some degree, see by the notes to which his name is affixed, contributed a great deal of zealous assistance and valuable information.

He also communicated a copy of Mrs. Piozzi's anecdotes, copiously annotated, *propriâ manu*, by Mr. Malone. These notes have been of use in explaining some obscurities; they guide us also to the source of many of Mr. Boswell's charges against Mrs. Piozzi; and have had an effect that Mr. Malone could neither have expected or wished—that of tending rather to confirm than to impeach that lady's veracity.

Mr. J. L. Anderdon favoured the editor with the inspection of a portfolio bought at the sale of the library of Mr. James Boswell, junior, which contained

[1] A less perfect copy of these *Recollections* was also communicated by Mr. Gwatkin, who married one of Sir Joshua's nieces, for which the editor begs leave to offer his thanks.—Ed.

ie of the original letters, memoranda, and note ks, which had been used as materials for the LIFE. eir chief value, now, is to shew that as far as we y judge from this specimen, the printed book is faithful transcript from the original notes, except ly as to the suppression of names. Mr. Anderon's portfolio also contains Johnson's original draft f the *Prospectus* of the Dictionary, and a fair copy f it (written by an amanuensis, but signed, *in orm*, by Johnson), addressed to Lord Chesterfield, on which his lordship appears to have made a few critical notes.[1]

Macleod, the son of the young gentleman who, in 1773, received Dr. Johnson and Mr. Boswell at his ancient castle of Dunvegan, has communicated a fragment of an autobiography of his father, which, on account as well of the mention of that visit as of the interest which the publications of both Johnson and Boswell excited about this young chieftain, the editor has preserved in the appendix to the third volume.

Through the obliging interposition of Mr. Appleyard, private secretary of Lord Spencer, Mrs. Rose, the daughter of Dr. Strahan, has favoured the editor with copies of several letters of Dr. Johnson to her father, one or two only of which Mr. Boswell had been able to obtain.

In addition to these contributions of manuscript materials, the editor has to acknowledge much and

[1] This attention on the part of Lord Chesterfield renders still more puzzling Johnson's conduct towards his lordship (see vol. i. p. 244, *et seq.*); and shows that there was some mistake in the statement attributed to Doctor Taylor (v. i. p. 159), that the manuscript had reached Lord Chesterfield accidentally, and without Dr. Johnson's knowledge or consent.—ED.

valuable assistance from numerous literary and distinguished friends.

The venerable Lord Stowel, the friend and executor of Dr. Johnson, was one of the first persons who suggested this work to the editor: he was pleased to take a great interest in it, and kindly endeavoured to explain the obscurities which were stated to him; but he confessed, at the same time, that the application had in some instances come rather *too late*, and regretted that an edition on this principle had not been undertaken when full light might have been obtained. His lordship was also so kind as to dictate, in his own happy and peculiar style, some notes of his recollections of Dr. Johnson. These, by a very unusual accident[1], were lost, and his lordship's great age and increasing infirmity have deterred the editor from again troubling him on the subject. A few points, however, in which the editor could trust to his recollection, will be found in the notes.

To his revered friend, Dr. Elrington, Lord Bishop of Ferns, the editor begs leave to offer his best thanks for much valuable advice and assistance, and for a continuance of that friendly interest with which his lordship has for many years, and in more important concerns, honoured him.

Sir Walter Scott, whose personal kindness to the editor and indefatigable good-nature to every body

[1] They were transmitted by post, addressed to Sir Walter Scott in Edinburgh for his perusal; after a considerable lapse of time, Sir Walter was written to to return them—he had never had them. It then appeared that the post office bag which contained this packet and several others had been lost, and it has never been heard of. Some of the editor's friends have reproached him with want of due caution in having trusted this packet to the post, but he thinks unjustly. There is, perhaps, no individual now alive who has despatched and received so great a number of letters as the editor, and he can scarcely recollect an instance of a similar loss.—Ed.

are surpassed only by his genius, found time from his higher occupations to annotate a considerable portion of this work—the *Tour to the Hebrides*—and has continued his aid to the very conclusion.

The Right Honourable Sir James Mackintosh, whose acquaintance with literary men and literary history is so extensive, and who, although not of the Johnsonian circle, became early in life acquainted with most of the survivors of that society, not only approved and encouraged the editor's design, but has, as the reader will see, been good enough to contribute to its execution. It were to be wished, that he himself could have been induced to undertake the work —too humble indeed for his powers, but which he is, of all men now living, perhaps, the fittest to execute.

Mr. Alexander Chalmers, the ingenious and learned editor of the last London edition, has, with great candour and liberality, given the present editor all the assistance in his power—regretting and wondering, like Lord Stowel and Sir James Mackintosh, that so much should be forgotten of what, at no remote period, every body must have known.

To Mr. D'Israeli's love and knowledge of literary history, and to his friendly assistance, the editor is very much indebted; as well as to Mr. Ellis of the British Museum, for the readiness he has on this and all other occasions shown to afford the editor every information in his power.

The Marquis Wellesley has taken an encouraging interest in the work, and has improved it by some valuable observations; and the Marquis of Lansdowne, Earl Spencer, Lord Bexley, and Lord St.

Helens, the son of Dr. Johnson's early friend Mr. Fitzherbert, have been so obliging as to answer some inquiries with which it was found necessary to trouble them.

How the editor may have arranged all these materials, and availed himself of so much assistance, it is not for him to decide. Situated as he was when he began and until he had nearly completed this work, he could not have ventured to undertake a more serious task; and he fears that even this desultory and gossiping kind of employment will be found to have suffered from the weightier occupations in which he was engaged, as well as from his own deficiencies.

If unfortunately he shall be found to have failed in his attempt to improve the original work, he will still have the consolation of thinking that there is no great harm done. For, as he has retrenched *nothing* from the best editions of the LIFE and the TOUR, and has contrived to compress *all his additions* within the same number of volumes, he trusts that the purchasers of this edition can have no reasonable cause to complain. The additions are carefully discriminated[1], and hardly a syllable[2] of Mr. Boswell's text or of the notes in Mr. Malone's editions have been omitted. So that the worst that can happen is that all the present editor has contributed may, if the reader so pleases, be rejected as *surplusage*.

Of the value of the *notes* with which his friends

[1] By being inserted between brackets, thus [ ]. In a few instances, one or other of these marks has been by an error of the press omitted, but it is hoped that the context will always enable the reader to rectify the mistake.—ED.

[2] In two or three places an indelicate expression has been omitted; and, in half a dozen instances (always, however, stated in the notes), the insertion of new matter has occasioned the omission or alteration of a few words in the text.—ED.

have favoured him, the editor can have no doubt; of his own, he will only say, that he has endeavoured to make them at once concise and explanatory. He hopes he has cleared up some obscurities, supplied some deficiencies, and, in many cases, saved the reader the trouble of referring to dictionaries and magazines for notices of the various persons and facts which are incidentally mentioned[1].

In some cases he has candidly confessed, and in many more he fears he will have shown, his own ignorance; but he can say, that when he has so failed, it has not been for want of diligent inquiry after the desired information.

He has not considered it any part of his duty to defend or to controvert the statements or opinions recorded in the text; but in a few instances, in which either a matter of *fact* has been evidently misstated, or an important *principle* has been heedlessly invaded or too lightly treated, he has ventured a few words towards correcting the error.

The desultory nature of the work itself, the repetitions in some instances and the contradictions in others, are perplexing to those who may seek for Dr. Johnson's final opinion on any given subject. This difficulty the editor could not hope, and has, therefore, not attempted, to remove; it is inevitable in the transcript of table-talk so various, so loose, and so extensive; but he has endeavoured to alleviate it by occasional references to the different places where the same subject is discussed, and by a copious, and he trusts, satisfactory index.

[1] As some proof of diligence, the editor may be allowed to state that the *Variorum* notes to the former edition were fewer than 1100, while the number of his *additional* notes is nearly 2500.—Ed.

With respect to the spirit towards Dr. JOHNSON himself by which the editor is actuated, he begs leave to say that he feels and has always felt a great, but, he hopes, not a blind admiration of Dr. Johnson. For his writings he feels that admiration undivided and uninterrupted. In his personal conduct and conversation there may be occasionally something to regret and (though rarely) something to disapprove, but less, perhaps, than there would be in those of any other man, whose words, actions, and even thoughts should be exposed to public observation so nakedly as, by a strange concurrence of circumstances, Dr. Johnson's have been.

Having no domestic ties or duties, the latter portion of his life was, as Mrs. Piozzi observes, nothing but *conversation*, and that conversation was watched and recorded from night to night and from hour to hour with zealous attention and unceasing diligence. No man, the most staid or the most guarded, is always the same in health, in spirits, in opinions. Human life is a series of inconsistencies; and when Johnson's early misfortunes, his protracted poverty, his strong passions, his violent prejudices, and, above all, his mental infirmities are considered, it is only wonderful that a portrait so laboriously minute and so painfully faithful does not exhibit more of blemish, incongruity, and error.

The life of Dr. Johnson is indeed a most curious *chapter in the history of man;* for certainly there is no instance of the life of any other human being having been exhibited in so much detail, or with so much fidelity. There are, perhaps, not many men who have practised so much self-examination as to

know *themselves* as well as every reader knows Dr. Johnson.

We must recollect that it is not his *table-talk* or his literary conversations only that have been published: all his most private and most trifling correspondence—all his most common as well as his most confidential intercourses—all his most secret communion with his own conscience—and even the solemn and contrite exercises of his piety, have been divulged and exhibited to the "garish eye" of the world without reserve—I had almost said, without delicacy. Young, with gloomy candour, has said

> "Heaven's Sovereign saves all beings but himself
> That hideous sight, a naked human heart."

What a man must Johnson have been, whose heart, having been laid more bare than that of any other mortal ever was, has passed almost unblemished through so terrible an ordeal!

The editor confesses, that if he could have had any voice as to the original publications, he probably might have shrunk from the responsibility incurred by Mrs. Piozzi, Mr. Boswell, and, above all, Dr. Strahan—even though they appear to have had (at least, *in some degree*) Dr. Johnson's own sanction for the disclosures they have made. But such disclosures having been made, it has appeared to the editor interesting and even important to concentrate into one full and perfect view every thing that can serve to complete a history—so extraordinary—so *unique*.

But while we contemplate with such interest this admirable and perfect *portrait*, let us not forget the *painter*: pupils and imitators have added draperies

and back grounds, but the *head* and *figure* are by Mr. Boswell!

Mr. Burke told Sir James Mackintosh that he thought Johnson showed more powers of mind in company than in his writings, and on another occasion said, that he thought Johnson appeared greater in Mr. Boswell's volumes than even in his own.

It was a strange and fortunate concurrence, that one so prone to talk and who talked so well, should be brought into such close contact and confidence with one so zealous and so able to record. Dr. Johnson was a man of extraordinary powers, but Mr. Boswell had qualities, in their own way, almost as rare. He united lively manners with indefatigable diligence, and the volatile curiosity of a *man about town* with the drudging patience of a *chronicler*. With a very good opinion of himself, he was quick in discerning, and frank in applauding, the excellencies of others. Though proud of his own name and lineage, and ambitious of the countenance of the great, he was yet so cordial an admirer of *merit*, wherever found, that much public ridicule, and something like contempt, were excited by the *modest assurance* with which he pressed his acquaintance on all the *notorieties* of his time, and by the ostentatious (but, in the main, laudable) assiduity with which he attended the exile Paoli and the low-born Johnson! These were amiable, and, for us, fortunate inconsistencies. His contemporaries indeed, not without some colour of reason, occasionally complained of him as vain, inquisitive, troublesome, and giddy; but his vanity was inoffensive—his curiosity was commonly directed towards laudable objects—when he meddled, he did so, generally, from good-

natured motives—and his giddiness was only an exuberant gaiety, which never failed in the respect and reverence due to literature, morals, and religion: and posterity gratefully acknowledges the taste, temper, and talents with which he selected, enjoyed, and described that polished and intellectual society which still lives in his work, and without his work had perished!

"Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona
Multi: sed omnes illacrymabiles
Urgentur, ignotique longâ
Nocte, carent quia vate sacro."

Such imperfect though interesting sketches as Ben Jonson's visit to Drummond, Selden's Table Talk, Swift's Journal, and Spence's Anecdotes, only tantalise our curiosity and excite our regret that there was no *Boswell* to preserve the conversation and illustrate the life and times of Addison, of Swift himself, of Milton, and, above all, of Shakspeare! We can hardly refrain from indulging ourselves with the imagination of works so instructive and delightful; but that were idle; except as it may tend to increase our obligation to the faithful and fortunate biographer of Dr. Johnson.

Mr. Boswell's birth and education familiarized him with the highest of his acquaintance, and his good-nature and conviviality with the lowest. He describes society of all classes with the happiest discrimination. Even his foibles assisted his curiosity; he was sometimes laughed at, but always well received; he excited no envy, he imposed no restraint. It was well known that he made notes of every conversation, yet no timidity was alarmed, no delicacy demurred; and we are perhaps indebted to the lighter

parts of his character for the patient indulgence with which every body submitted to sit for their pictures. Nor were his talents inconsiderable. He had looked a good deal into books, and more into the world. The narrative portion of his works is written with good sense, in an easy and perspicuous style, and, without (which seems odd enough) any palpable imitation of Johnson. But in recording conversations he is unrivalled; that he was eminently accurate in substance, we have the evidence of all his contemporaries; but he is also in a high degree characteristic —dramatic. The incidental observations with which he explains or enlivens the dialogue, are terse, appropriate, and picturesque—we not merely hear his company, *we see them!*

Yet his *father* was, we are told, by no means satisfied[1] with the life he led, nor his eldest *son* with the kind of reputation he attained; neither liked to hear of his connexion even with Paoli or Johnson; and both would have been better pleased if he had contented himself with a domestic life of sober respectability.

The public, however, the dispenser of fame, has judged differently, and considers the biographer of Johnson as the most eminent branch of the family pedigree. With less activity, less indiscretion, less curiosity, less enthusiasm, he might, perhaps, have been what the old lord would, no doubt, have thought more respectable; and have been pictured on the walls of Auchinleck (the very name of which we never should have heard) by some stiff,

[1] See vol. iii. p. 78, *n.* This feeling is less surprising in old Lord Auchinleck than in Sir Alexander, who was himself a man of the world, clever, literary, and social.—ED.

provincial painter in a lawyer's wig or a squire's hunting cap; but his portrait, by Reynolds [1], would not have been ten times engraved; his name could never have become—as it is likely to be—as far spread and as lasting as the English language; and "the world had wanted" a work to which it refers as a manual of amusement, a repository of wit, wisdom, and morals, and a lively and faithful history of the manners and literature of England, during a period hardly second in brilliancy, and superior in importance, even to the Augustan age of Anne.

1st May, 1831. J. W. C.

[1] The following letter (in the *Reynolds papers*) from Mr. Boswell to Sir Joshua, on the subject of this portrait, ought not to be lost.

"*London, 7th June, 1785.*

"MY DEAR SIR,—The debts which I contracted in my father's lifetime will not be cleared off by me for some years. I therefore think it unconscientious to indulge myself in any expensive article of elegant luxury. But in the mean time, you may die, or I may die; and I should regret very much that there should not be at Auchinleck my portrait painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds, with whom I have the felicity of living in social intercourse.

"I have a proposal to make to you. I am for certain to be called to the English bar next February. Will you now do my picture, and the price shall be paid out of the first fees which I receive as a barrister in Westminster Hall. Or if that fund should fail, it shall be paid at any rate in five years hence, by myself or my representatives.

"If you are pleased to approve of this proposal, your signifying your concurrence underneath, upon two duplicates, one of which shall be kept by each of us, will be a sufficient voucher of the obligation. I ever am, with very sincere regard, my dear sir, your faithful and affectionate humble servant,

"JAMES BOSWELL."

"*I agree to the above conditions.*

"*J. Reynolds.*"

"*London, 10th Sept.* 1785."

An engraving from Sir Joshua's portrait is prefixed to one of these volumes: but the editor has been favoured by Mrs. Denham with a pencil sketch of Mr. Boswell in later life, by Sir Thomas Lawrence, which, although bordering on caricature, is so evidently characteristic, and (as the editor is assured) so identically *like*, that he has had it copied, and thinks it will be acceptable as a lively illustration of both the mind and manners of Mr. Boswell—busy self-importance and dogmatical good-nature were never more strongly expressed.—ED.

[ORIGINAL TITLE-PAGE.]

THE

LIFE

OF

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL. D.

COMPREHENDING

AN ACCOUNT OF HIS STUDIES,
AND NUMEROUS WORKS,

IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER;

A SERIES OF HIS EPISTOLARY CORRESPONDENCE

AND CONVERSATIONS WITH MANY EMINENT PERSONS;

AND

VARIOUS ORIGINAL PIECES OF HIS COMPOSITION,
NEVER BEFORE PUBLISHED.

THE WHOLE EXHIBITING A VIEW OF LITERATURE AND LITERARY MEN IN GREAT-BRITAIN, FOR NEAR HALF A CENTURY DURING WHICH HE FLOURISHED.

BY JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

——— Quò fit ut OMNIS
Votiva pateat veluti descripta tabella
VITA SENIS ———

HORAT.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY HENRY BALDWIN,
FOR CHARLES DILLY, IN THE POULTRY.

M DCC XCI.

" After my death I wish no other herald,
No other speaker of my living actions,
To keep mine honour from corruption,
But such an honest chronicler as Griffith [1]."

SHAKSPEARE, *Henry VIII.*

[1] See Dr. Johnson's letter to Mrs. Thrale, dated Ostick in Skie, September 30, 1773: "Boswell writes a regular Journal of our travels, which I think contains as much of what I say and do, as of all other occurrences together; '*for such a faithful chronicler* is *Griffith.*' "—BOSWELL.

DEDICATION.

TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

MY DEAR SIR,—Every liberal motive that can actuate an authour in the dedication of his labours concurs in directing me to you, as the person to whom the following work should be inscribed.

If there be a pleasure in celebrating the distinguished merit of a contemporary, mixed with a certain degree of vanity, not altogether inexcusable, in appearing fully sensible of it, where can I find one, in complimenting whom I can with more general approbation gratify those feelings? Your excellence not only in the art over which you have long presided with unrivalled fame, but also in philosophy and elegant literature, is well known to the present, and will continue to be the admiration of future ages. Your equal and placid temper, your variety of conversation, your true politeness, by which you are so amiable in private society, and that enlarged hospitality which has long made your house a common centre of union for the great, the accomplished, the learned, and the ingenious; all these qualities I can, in perfect confidence of not being accused of flattery, ascribe to you.

If a man may indulge an honest pride, in having it known to the world that he has been thought worthy of particular attention by a person of the first eminence in the age in which he lived, whose company has been universally courted, I am justified in availing myself of the usual privilege of a dedi-

cation, when I mention that there has been a long and uninterrupted friendship between us.

If gratitude should be acknowledged for favours received, I have this opportunity, my dear sir, most sincerely to thank you for the many happy hours which I owe to your kindness,—for the cordiality with which you have at all times been pleased to welcome me,—for the number of valuable acquaintances to whom you have introduced me,—for the *noctes cœnæque Deûm*, which I have enjoyed under your roof.

If a work should be inscribed to one who is master of the subject of it, and whose approbation, therefore, must ensure it credit and success, the Life of Dr. Johnson is, with the greatest propriety, dedicated to Sir Joshua Reynolds, who was the intimate and beloved friend of that great man; the friend whom he declared to be "the most invulnerable man he knew; whom, if he should quarrel with him, he should find the most difficulty how to abuse." You, my dear sir, studied him, and knew him well; you venerated and admired him. Yet luminous as he was upon the whole, you perceived all the shades which mingled in the grand composition, all the little peculiarities and slight blemishes which marked the literary Colossus. Your very warm commendation of the specimen which I gave in my "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides," of my being able to preserve his conversation in an authentick and lively manner, which opinion the publick has confirmed, was the best encouragement for me to persevere in my purpose of producing the whole of my stores.

In one respect, this work will in some passages be different from the former. In my "Tour," I was almost unboundedly open in my communications; and from my eagerness to display the wonderful fer-

tility and readiness of Johnson's wit, freely showed to the world its dexterity, even when I was myself the object of it. I trusted that I should be liberally understood, as knowing very well what I was about, and by no means as simply unconscious of the pointed effects of the satire. I own, indeed, that I was arrogant enough to suppose that the tenour of the rest of the book would sufficiently guard me against such a strange imputation. But it seems I judged too well of the world; for, though I could scarcely believe it, I have been undoubtedly informed, that many persons, especially in distant quarters, not penetrating enough into Johnson's character, so as to understand his mode of treating his friends, have arraigned my judgment, instead of seeing that I was sensible of all that they could observe.

It is related of the great Dr. Clarke, that when in one of his leisure hours he was unbending himself with a few friends in the most playful and frolicksome manner, he observed Beau Nash approaching; upon which he suddenly stopped. "My boys," said he, "let us be grave—here comes a fool." The world, my friend, I have found to be a great fool as to that particular on which it has become necessary to speak very plainly. I have therefore in this work been more reserved; and though I tell nothing but the truth, I have still kept in my mind that the whole truth is not always to be exposed. This, however, I have managed so as to occasion no diminution of the pleasure which my book should afford, though malignity may sometimes be disappointed of its gratifications. I am, my dear sir, your much obliged friend and faithful humble servant,

London, 20th April, 1791. JAMES BOSWELL.

MR. BOSWELL'S ADVERTISEMENTS.

TO THE FIRST EDITION.

I AT last deliver to the world a work which I have long promised, and of which, I am afraid, too high expectations have been raised. The delay of its publication must be imputed, in a considerable degree, to the extraordinary zeal which has been shown by distinguished persons in all quarters to supply me with additional information concerning its illustrious subject; resembling in this the grateful tribes of ancient nations, of which every individual was eager to throw a stone upon the grave of a departed hero, and thus to share in the pious office of erecting an honourable monument to his memory.

The labour and anxious attention with which I have collected and arranged the materials of which these volumes are composed, will hardly be conceived by those who read them with careless facility. The stretch of mind and prompt assiduity by which so many conversations were preserved, I myself, at some distance of time, contemplate with wonder; and I must be allowed to suggest, that the nature of the work, in other respects, as it consists of innumerable detached particulars, all which, even the most minute, I have spared no pains to ascertain with a scrupulous authenticity, has occasioned a degree of trouble far beyond that of any other species of composition. Were I to detail the books which I have consulted, and the inquiries which I have found it necessary to make by various channels, I should probably be thought ridi-

culously ostentatious. Let me only observe, as a specimen of my trouble, that I have sometimes been obliged to run half over London, in order to fix a date correctly; which, when I had accomplished, I well knew would obtain me no praise, though a failure would have been to my discredit. And after all, perhaps, hard as it may be, I shall not be surprised if omissions or mistakes be pointed out with invidious severity. I have also been extremely careful as to the exactness of my quotations; holding that there is a respect due to the publick, which should oblige every authour to attend to this, and never to presume to introduce them with, "I think I have read," or "If I remember right," when the originals may be examined.

I beg leave to express my warmest thanks to those who have been pleased to favour me with communications and advice in the conduct of my work. But I cannot sufficiently acknowledge my obligations to my friend Mr. Malone, who was so good as to allow me to read to him almost the whole of my manuscript, and made such remarks as were greatly for the advantage of the work; though it is but fair to him to mention, that upon many occasions I differed from him, and followed my own judgment. I regret exceedingly that I was deprived of the benefit of his revision, when not more than one half of the book had passed through the press; but after having completed his very laborious and admirable edition of Shakspeare, for which he generously would accept of no other reward but that fame which he has so deservedly obtained, he fulfilled his promise of a long-wished-for visit to his relations in Ireland; from whence his safe return *finibus Aticis* is desired by his friends here, with all the classical ardour of *Sic te*

Diva potens Cypri; for there is no man in whom more elegant and worthy qualities are united; and whose society, therefore, is more valued by those who know him.

It is painful to me to think, that while I was carrying on this work, several of those to whom it would have been most interesting have died. Such melancholy disappointments we know to be incident to humanity; but we do not feel them the less. Let me particularly lament the Reverend Thomas Warton and the Reverend Dr. Adams. Mr. Warton, amidst his variety of genius and learning, was an excellent biographer. His contributions to my collection are highly estimable; and as he had a true relish of my "Tour to the Hebrides," I trust I should now have been gratified with a larger share of his kind approbation. Dr. Adams, eminent as the head of a college, as a writer, and as a most amiable man, had known Johnson from his early years, and was his friend through life. What reason I had to hope for the countenance of that venerable gentleman to this work will appear from what he wrote to me upon a former occasion from Oxford, November 17, 1785:—"Dear sir, I hazard this letter, not knowing where it will find you, to thank you for your very agreeable 'Tour,' which I found here on my return from the country, and in which you have depicted our friend so perfectly to my fancy, in every attitude, every scene and situation, that I have thought myself in the company and of the party almost throughout. It has given very general satisfaction; and those who have found most fault with a passage here and there, have agreed that they could not help going through, and being entertained with the whole. I wish, indeed, some few gross expressions had been softened, and a few

of our hero's foibles had been a little more shaded; but it is useful to see the weaknesses incident to great minds; and you have given us Dr. Johnson's authority that in history all ought to be told."

Such a sanction to my faculty of giving a just representation of Dr. Johnson I could not conceal. Nor will I suppress my satisfaction in the consciousness, that by recording so considerable a portion of the wisdom and wit of "the brightest ornament of the eighteenth century[1]," I have largely provided for the instruction and entertainment of mankind.

London, 20th April, 1791. J. BOSWELL.

TO THE SECOND EDITION.

That I was anxious for the success of a work which had employed much of my time and labour, I do not wish to conceal; but whatever doubts I at any time entertained, have been entirely removed by the very favourable reception with which it has been honoured. That reception has excited my best exertions to render my book more perfect; and in this endeavour I have had the assistance not only of some of my particular friends, but of many other learned and ingenious men, by which I have been enabled to rectify some mistakes, and to enrich the work with many valuable additions. These I have ordered to be printed separately in quarto, for the accommodation of the purchasers of the first edition. May I be permitted to say that the typography of both editions does honour to the press of Mr. Henry Baldwin, now Master of the Worshipful Company of Stationers, whom I have long known as a worthy man and an obliging friend.

[1] See Mr. Malone's Preface to his edition of Shakspeare.—BOSWELL.

In the strangely mixed scenes of human existence, our feelings are often at once pleasing and painful. Of this truth, the progress of the present work furnishes a striking instance. It was highly gratifying to me that my friend, Sir Joshua Reynolds, to whom it is inscribed, lived to peruse it, and to give the strongest testimony to its fidelity; but before a second edition, which he contributed to improve, could be finished, the world has been deprived of that most valuable man; a loss of which the regret will be deep, and lasting, and extensive, proportionate to the felicity which he diffused through a wide circle of admirers and friends.

In reflecting that the illustrious subject of this work, by being more extensively and intimately known, however elevated before, has risen in the veneration and love of mankind, I feel a satisfaction beyond what fame can afford. We cannot, indeed, too much or too often admire his wonderful powers of mind, when we consider that the principal store of wit and wisdom which this work contains was not a particular selection from his general conversation, but was merely his occasional talk at such times as I had the good fortune to be in his company; and, without doubt, if his discourse at other periods had been collected with the same attention, the whole tenour of what he uttered would have been found equally excellent.

His strong, clear, and animated enforcement of religion, morality, loyalty, and subordination, while it delights and improves the wise and the good, will, I trust, prove an effectual antidote to that detestable sophistry which has been lately imported from France, under the false name of philosophy, and with a malignant industry has been employed against the peace, good order, and happiness of society, in our

free and prosperous country: but, thanks be to God, without producing the pernicious effects which were hoped for by its propagators.

It seems to me, in my moments of self-complacency, that this extensive biographical work, however inferior in its nature, may in one respect be assimilated to the Odyssey. Amidst a thousand entertaining and instructive episodes, the hero is never long out of sight; for they are all in some degree connected with him; and he, in the whole course of the history, is exhibited by the authour for the best advantage of his readers:

> —Quid virtus et quid sapientia possit,
> Utile proposuit nobis exemplar Ulyssen.

Should there be any cold-blooded and morose mortals who really dislike this book, I will give them a story to apply. When the great Duke of Marlborough, accompanied by Lord Cadogan, was one day reconnoitring the army in Flanders, a heavy rain came on, and they both called for their cloaks. Lord Cadogan's servant, a good-humoured alert lad, brought his lordship's in a minute. The duke's servant, a lazy sulky dog, was so sluggish, that his grace being wet to the skin, reproved him, and had for answer, with a grunt, "I came as fast as I could;" upon which the duke calmly said, "Cadogan, I would not for a thousand pounds have that fellow's temper."

There are some men, I believe, who have, or think they have, a very small share of vanity. Such may speak of their literary fame in a decorous style of diffidence. But I confess, that I am so formed by nature and by habit, that to restrain the effusion of delight, on having obtained such fame, to me would be truly painful. Why then should I suppress it? Why "out of the abundance of the heart" should I

not speak? Let me then mention with a warm, but no insolent exultation, that I have been regaled with spontaneous praise of my work by many and various persons, eminent for their rank, learning, talents, and accomplishments; much of which praise I have under their hands to be reposited in my archives at Auchinleck. An honourable and reverend friend speaking of the favourable reception of my volumes, even in the circles of fashion and elegance, said to me, "you have made them all talk Johnson." Yes, I may add, I have *Johnsonised* the land; and I trust they will not only talk but think Johnson.

To enumerate those to whom I have been thus indebted would be tediously ostentatious. I cannot however but name one, whose praise is truly valuable, not only on account of his knowledge and abilities, but on account of the magnificent, yet dangerous embassy, in which he is now employed, which makes every thing that relates to him peculiarly interesting. Lord Macartney favoured me with his own copy of my book, with a number of notes, of which I have availed myself. On the first leaf I found, in his lordship's hand-writing, an inscription of such high commendation, that even I, vain as I am, cannot prevail on myself to publish it.

J. BOSWELL.

1st July, 1793.

MR. MALONE'S ADVERTISEMENTS.

TO THE THIRD EDITION.

SEVERAL valuable letters, and other curious matter, having been communicated to the authour too late to be arranged in that chronological order, which he had endeavoured uniformly to observe in his work, he was obliged to introduce them in his second edition, by way of Addenda, as commodiously as he could. In the present edition they have been distributed in their proper places. In revising his volumes for a new edition, he had pointed out where some of these materials should be inserted; but unfortunately, in the midst of his labours, he was seized with a fever, of which, to the great regret of all his friends, he died on the 19th of May, 1795. All the notes that he had written in the margin of the copy, which he had in part revised, are here faithfully preserved; and a few new notes have been added, principally by some of those friends to whom the authour, in the former editions, acknowledged his obligations. Those subscribed with the letter B. were communicated by Dr. Burney; those to which the letters J. B. are annexed, by the Rev. J. B. Blakeway, of Shrewsbury, to whom Mr. Boswell acknowledged himself indebted for some judicious remarks on the first edition of his work; and the letters J. B—. O. are annexed to some remarks furnished by the authour's second son, a student of Brazen-Nose College in Oxford. Some valuable observations were communicated by James Bindley, Esq. first commissioner in the stamp-office,

which have been acknowledged in their proper places. For all those without any signature, Mr. Malone is answerable. Every new remark, not written by the authour, for the sake of distinction has been enclosed within crotchets; in one instance, however, the printer, by mistake, has affixed this mark to a note relative to the Rev. Thomas Fysche Palmer, (see vol. iv. p. 129), which was written by Mr. Boswell, and therefore ought not to have been thus distinguished.

I have only to add, that the proof-sheets of the present edition not having passed through my hands, I am not answerable for any typographical errors that may be found in it. Having, however, been printed at the very accurate press of Mr. Baldwin, I make no doubt it will be found not less perfect than the former edition; the greatest care having been taken, by correctness and elegance, to do justice to one of the most instructive and entertaining works in the English language.

EDM. MALONE.

8th April, 1799.

TO THE FOURTH EDITION.

In this edition are inserted some new letters, of which the greater part has been obligingly communicated by the Rev. Dr. Vyse, Rector of Lambeth. Those written by Dr. Johnson, concerning his mother in her last illness, furnish a new proof of his great piety and tenderness of heart, and therefore cannot but be acceptable to the readers of this very popular work. Some new notes also have been added, which, as well as the observations inserted in the third edition, and the letters now introduced, are carefully included within crotchets, that the authour may not be an-

swerable for any thing which had not the sanction of his approbation. The remarks of his friends are distinguished as formerly, except those of Mr. Malone, to which the letter M. is now subjoined. Those to which the letter K. is affixed were communicated by my learned friend, the Rev. Dr. Kearney, formerly senior Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, and now beneficed in the diocess of Raphoe, in Ireland, of which he is archdeacon.

Of a work which has been before the publick for thirteen years with increasing approbation, and of which near four thousand copies have been dispersed, it is not necessary to say more; yet I cannot refrain from adding, that, highly as it is now estimated, it will, I am confident, be still more valued by posterity a century hence, when all the actors in the scene shall be numbered with the dead; when the excellent and extraordinary man, whose wit and wisdom are here recorded, shall be viewed at a still greater distance; and the instruction and entertainment they afford will at once produce reverential gratitude, admiration, and delight[1].

E. M.

20th June, 1804.

[1] [Mr. Malone published a fifth edition in 1807, and a sixth in 1811; Mr. Chalmers a seventh in 1822; and an anonymous editor another, in Oxford, in 1826. Of publications so recent, the editor would not have felt justified in making an unpermitted use; but in fact there was little to be borrowed from any of them, except that of Mr. Chalmers; and his liberality, by pointing out such of the original sources of information as the editor had not himself previously discovered, has enabled him to complete this edition with all the information which Mr. Chalmers could afford.—Ed.]

ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS IN VOL. I.

Page 7,—l. 19, . . . *To extract, add marginal reference*—Gent. Mag.
— 50,—l. 14, . . *for* hope, *read*—hoped.
— 51, note 2,—l. 7, . *for* unpublished, *read*—published.
— 125, note, . . *for* 1378, *read*—1738.
— 174, note, . . . *add*, The London Magazine for February states that Irene was then acting with great applause.
— 178, ... Mrs. Piozzi's date of the paper on *Procrastination* must be a mistake, as Johnson did not know Sir J. Reynolds so early. See vol. i. p. 227, and vol. iii. p. 408.
— 184, note 2, . . *for* Screbbleriad, *read*—Scribbleriad.
— 214, note 1,—l. 13, *for* 3rd, *read*—10th June.
— 301, 302, 303, mar. *add*—Tyers.
— 309, margin, . . *dele*—Hawk. p. 360, 361.
— 320,—line last, . *for* magna,—*read* magni.
— 337, note 3, . . *for* post, p. 329, *read*—ante, 302, and post, vol. ii. p. 135.
— 342,—line 24, . *for* who, *read*—how.
— 368,—line 29, . *for* his, *read*—its.
— 420, line 30, . . *for* mere, *read*—more.
— 445, note, . . *for* 1736, *read*—1737.
— 476, . . . On farther examination of the MS., the editor is satisfied that the date is right, but that *Dr.* has been since substituted for *Mr.*
— 479, ... Johnson's position is to be found in Lord Kames's History of Man, book iii. sec. 12.
— 480, note 2, . . *for* would, *read*—could.
— 499, note 1, . . *add*—several others have reached the editor since this note was written.
— 511, margin, . . *for* 218, *read*—213.
— 528,—line 2, . *for* 402, *read*—492.
— 62, note 1; p. 117, note 1; p. 184, note 1; p. 245, note 2; *add*—En.]
— 108, note 2; p. 132, note 2; p. 194, note 1; p. 198, note 1; *add*—Boswell.]

MR. BOSWELL'S INTRODUCTION.

To write the Life of him who excelled all mankind in writing the lives of others, and who, whether we consider his extraordinary endowments, or his various works, has been equalled by few in any age, is an arduous, and may be reckoned in me a presumptuous task.

Had Dr. Johnson written his own Life, in conformity with the opinion which he has given [1], that every man's life may be best written by himself; had he employed in the preservation of his own history, that clearness of narration and elegance of language in which he has embalmed so many eminent persons, the world would probably have had the most perfect example of biography that was ever exhibited. But although he at different times, in a desultory manner, committed to writing many particulars of the progress of his mind and fortunes, he never had persevering diligence enough to form them into a regular composition. Of these memorials a few have been preserved; but the greater part was consigned by him to the flames, a few days before his death.

As I had the honour and happiness of enjoying his friendship for upwards of twenty years; as I had the scheme of writing his life constantly in view; as he was well apprised of this circumstance, and from time to time obligingly satisfied my inquiries, by commu-

[1] Idler, No. 84.—Boswell.

nicating to me the incidents of his early years; as I acquired a facility in recollecting, and was very assiduous in recording, his conversation, of which the extraordinary vigour and vivacity constituted one of the first features of his character; and as I have spared no pains in obtaining materials concerning him, from every quarter where I could discover that they were to be found, and have been favoured with the most liberal communications by his friends; I flatter myself that few biographers have entered upon such a work as this with more advantages; independent of literary abilities, in which I am not vain enough to compare myself with some great names who have gone before me in this kind of writing.

Since my work was announced, several Lives and Memoirs of Dr. Johnson have been published, the most voluminous of which is one compiled for the booksellers of London, by Sir John Hawkins, Knt. [1], a man, whom, during my long intimacy with Dr. Johnson, I never saw in his company, I think, but once, and I am sure not above twice. Johnson might have esteemed him for his decent, religious demeanour, and his knowledge of books and literary history; but from the rigid formality of his manners, it is evident that they never could have lived together with companionable ease and familiarity; nor had Sir John Hawkins that nice perception which was necessary to mark the finer and less obvious parts of Johnson's

[1] The greatest part of this book was written while Sir John Hawkins was alive; and I avow, that one object of my strictures was to make him feel some compunction for his illiberal treatment of Dr. Johnson. Since his decease, I have suppressed several of my remarks upon his work. But though I would not "war with the dead," *offensively*, I think it necessary to be strenuous in *defence* of my illustrious friend, which I cannot be, without strong animadversions upon a writer who has greatly injured him. Let me add, that though I doubt I should not have been very prompt to gratify Sir John Hawkins with any compliment in his lifetime, I do now frankly acknowledge, that, in my opinion, his volume, however inadequate and improper as a life of Dr. Johnson, and however discredited by unpardonable inaccuracies in other respects, contains a collection of curious anecdotes and observations, which few men but its authour could have brought together.—BOSWELL.

character. His being appointed one of his executors gave him an opportunity of taking possession of such fragments of a diary and other papers as were left; of which, before delivering them up to the residuary legatee, whose property they were, he endeavoured to extract the substance. In this he has not been very successful, as I have found upon a perusal of those papers, which have been since transferred to me. Sir John Hawkins's ponderous labours, I must acknowledge, exhibit a *farrago*, of which a considerable portion is not devoid of entertainment to the lovers of literary gossiping; but besides its being swelled out with long unnecessary extracts from various works (even one of several leaves from Osborne's Harleian Catalogue, and those not compiled by Johnson, but by Oldys), a very small part of it relates to the person who is the subject of the book; and in that there is such an inaccuracy in the statement of facts, as in so solemn an author is hardly excusable, and certainly makes his narrative very unsatisfactory. But what is still worse, there is throughout the whole of it a dark uncharitable cast, by which the most unfavourable construction is put upon almost every circumstance in the character and conduct of my illustrious friend; who, I trust, will, by a true and fair delineation, be vindicated both from the injurious misrepresentations of this authour, and from the slighter aspersions of a lady who once lived in great intimacy with him.

There is, in the British Museum, a letter from Bishop Warburton to Dr. Birch, on the subject of biography; which, though I am aware it may expose me to a charge of artfully raising the value of my own work, by contrasting it with that of which I have spoken, is so well conceived and expressed, that I cannot refrain from here inserting it.

"24th Nov. 1737.

"I shall endeavour," says Dr. Warburton, "to give you what satisfaction I can in any thing you want to be satisfied in any subject of Milton, and am extremely glad you intend to write his life. Almost all the life-writers we have had before Toland and Desmaiseaux, are indeed strange insipid creatures; and yet I had rather read the worst of them, than be obliged to go through with this of Milton's, or the other's life of Boileau, where there is such a dull, heavy succession of long quotations of disinteresting passages, that it makes their method quite nauseous. But the verbose, tasteless Frenchman, seems to lay it down as a principle, that every life must be a book; and what's worse, it proves a book without a life; for what do we know of Boileau, after all his tedious stuff? You are the only one (and I speak it without a compliment), that by the vigour of your style and sentiments, and the real importance of your materials, have the art (which one would imagine no one could have missed) of adding the agreements to the most agreeable subject in the world, which is literary history [1]."

Instead of melting down my materials into one mass, and constantly speaking in my own person, by which I might have appeared to have more merit in the execution of the work, I have resolved to adopt and enlarge upon the excellent plan of Mr. Mason, in his Memoirs of Gray. Wherever narrative is necessary to explain, connect and supply, I furnish it to the best of my abilities; but in the chronological series of Johnson's life, which I trace as distinctly as I can, year by year, I produce, wherever it is in my power, his own minutes, letters, or con-

[1] British Museum, 4320, Ayscough's Catal. Sloane MSS.—Boswell.

versation, being convinced that this mode is more lively, and will make my readers better acquainted with him than even most of those were who actually knew him, but could know him only partially; whereas there is here an accumulation of intelligence from various points, by which his character is more fully understood and illustrated.

Indeed I cannot conceive a more perfect mode of writing any man's life, than not only relating all the most important events of it in their order, but interweaving what he privately wrote, and said, and thought; by which mankind are enabled as it were to see him live, and to "live o'er each scene" with him, as he actually advanced through the several stages of his life. Had his other friends been as diligent and ardent as I was, he might have been almost entirely preserved. As it is, I will venture to say that he will be seen in this work more completely than any man who has ever yet lived.

And he will be seen as he really was; for I profess to write not his panegyrick, which must be all praise, but his life, which, great and good as he was, must not be supposed to be entirely perfect. To be as he was, is indeed subject of panegyrick enough to any man in this state of being; but in every picture there should be shade as well as light, and when I delineate him without reserve, I do what he himself recommended, both by his precept and his example.

"If the biographer writes from personal knowledge, and makes haste to gratify the publick curiosity, there is danger lest his interest, his fear, his gratitude, or his tenderness, overpower his fidelity, and tempt him to conceal, if not to invent. There are many who think it an act of piety to hide the faults or failings of their friends, even when they can no longer suffer by their detection; we therefore see

whole ranks of characters adorned with uniform panegyrick, and not to be known from one another but by extrinsick and casual circumstances. 'Let me remember,' says Hale, 'when I find myself inclined to pity a criminal, that there is likewise a pity due to the country.' If we owe regard to the memory of the dead, there is yet more respect to be paid to knowledge, to virtue, and to truth [1]."

What I consider as the peculiar value of the following work, is the quantity it contains of Johnson's conversation, which is universally acknowledged to have been eminently instructive and entertaining; and of which the specimens that I have given upon a former occasion have been received with so much approbation, that I have good grounds for supposing that the world will not be indifferent to more ample communications of a similar nature.

That the conversation of a celebrated man, if his talents have been exerted in conversation, will best display his character, is, I trust, too well established in the judgment of mankind to be at all shaken by a sneering observation of Mr. Mason, in his memoirs of Mr. William Whitehead, in which there is literally no *life*, but a mere dry narrative of facts. I do not think it was quite necessary to attempt a depreciation of what is universally esteemed, because it was not to be found in the immediate object of the ingenious writer's pen; for in truth, from a man so still and so tame, as to be contented to pass many years as the domestick companion of a superannuated lord and lady, conversation could no more be expected than from a Chinese mandarin on a chimney-piece, or the fantastick figures on a gilt leather skreen.

If authority be required, let us appeal to Plutarch, the prince of ancient biographers. Οὔτε ταῖς ἐπιφανεστάταις

[1] Rambler, No. 60.—Boswell.

πράξεσι πάντως ἐνέστι δήλωσις ἀρετῆς ἢ κακίας, ἀλλὰ πρᾶγμα βραχὺ πολλάκις, καὶ ῥῆμα, καὶ παιδιά τις ἐμφάσιν ἤθους ἐποίησεν μᾶλλον ἢ μάχαι μυριόνεκροι, παρατάξεις αἱ μέγισται, καὶ πολιορκία πόλεων. "Nor is it always in the most distinguished achievements that men's virtues or vices may be best discerned; but very often an action of small note, a short saying, or a jest, shall distinguish a person's real character more than the greatest sieges or the most important battles [1]."

To this may be added the sentiments of the very man whose life I am about to exhibit. "The business of the biographer is often to pass slightly over those performances and incidents which produce vulgar greatness, to lead the thoughts into domestick privacies, and display the minute details of daily life, where exteriour appendages are cast aside, and men excel each other only by prudence and by virtue. The account of Thuanus is with great propriety said by its authour to have been written, that it might lay open to posterity the private and familiar character of that man, *cujus ingenium et candorem ex ipsius scriptis sunt olim semper miraturi*, whose candour and genius will to the end of time be by his writings preserved in admiration.

"There are many invisible circumstances which, whether we read as inquirers after natural or moral knowledge, whether we intend to enlarge our science or increase our virtue, are more important than publick occurrences. Thus Sallust, the great master of nature, has not forgotten, in his account of Catiline, to remark, that his walk was now quick, and again slow, as an indication of a mind revolving with violent commotion. Thus the story of Melancthon affords a striking lecture on the value of time, by informing

[1] Plutarch's Life of Alexander—Langhorne's translation.—BOSWELL.

us, that when he had made an appointment, he expected not only the hour, but the minute to be fixed, that the day might not run out in the idleness of suspense; and all the plans and enterprises of De Wit are now of less importance to the world than that part of his personal character, which represents him as careful of his health, and negligent of his life.

"But biography has often been allotted to writers, who seem very little acquainted with the nature of their task, or very negligent about the performance. They rarely afford any other account than might be collected from publick papers, but imagine themselves writing a life, when they exhibit a chronological series of actions or preferments; and have so little regard to the manners or behaviour of their heroes, that more knowledge may be gained of a man's real character, by a short conversation with one of his servants, than from a formal and studied narrative, begun with his pedigree, and ended with his funeral.——

"There are, indeed, some natural reasons why these narratives are often written by such as were not likely to give much instruction or delight, and why most accounts of particular persons are barren and useless. If a life be delayed till interest and envy are at an end, we may hope for impartiality, but must expect little intelligence; for the incidents which give excellence to biography are of a volatile and evanescent kind, such as soon escape the memory, and are rarely transmitted by tradition. We know how few can pourtray a living acquaintance, except by his most prominent and observable particularities, and the grosser features of his mind; and it may be easily imagined how much of this little knowledge may be lost in imparting it, and how soon a succes-

sion of copies will lose all resemblance of the original [1]."

I am fully aware of the objections which may be made to the minuteness on some occasions of my detail of Johnson's conversation, and how happily it is adapted for the petty exercise of ridicule, by men of superficial understanding, and ludicrous fancy; but I remain firm and confident in my opinion, that minute particulars are frequently characteristick, and always amusing, when they relate to a distinguished man. I am therefore exceedingly unwilling that any thing, however slight, which my illustrious friend thought it worth his while to express, with any degree of point, should perish. For this almost superstitious reverence, I have found very old and venerable authority, quoted by our great modern prelate, Secker, in whose tenth sermon there is the following passage:

"*Rabbi David Kimchi*, a noted Jewish commentator, who lived about five hundred years ago, explains that passage in the first psalm, 'His leaf also shall not wither,' from Rabbins yet older than himself, thus: That *even the idle talk*, so he expresses it, *of a good man ought to be regarded;* the most superfluous things he saith are always of some value. And other ancient authours have the same phrase, nearly in the same sense."

Of one thing I am certain, that considering how highly the small portion which we have of the table-talk and other anecdotes of our celebrated writers is valued, and how earnestly it is regretted that we have not more, I am justified in preserving rather too many of Johnson's sayings, than too few; especially as from the diversity of dispositions it cannot be known with certainty beforehand, whether what

[1] Rambler, No. 60.—Boswell.

may seem trifling to some, and perhaps to the collector himself, may not be most agreeable to many; and the greater number that an authour can please in any degree, the more pleasure does there arise to a benevolent mind.

To those who are weak enough to think this a degrading task, and the time and labour which have been devoted to it misemployed, I shall content myself with opposing the authority of the greatest man of any age, Julius Cæsar, of whom Bacon observes, that "in his book of apophthegms which he collected, we see that he esteemed it more honour to make himself but a pair of tables, to take the wise and pithy words of others, than to have every word of his own to be made an apophthegm or an oracle[1]."

Having said thus much by way of introduction, I commit the following pages to the candour of the publick.

[1] Bacon's "Advancement of Learning," Book I.—BOSWELL.

DIRECTIONS FOR PLACING THE PLATES.

Dr. Johnson, when young, from a miniature in the possession of Dr. Harwood . to face title Vol. I.
Mr. Boswell . . . . . Do. Vol. II.
Map of the Hebrides, &c. . . . . page 250.
Mrs. Piozzi . . . . . Do. Vol. III.
Round Robin . . . . . page 449.
Mr. Boswell, from a sketch by Sir Thomas Lawrence . . . . . Do. Vol. IV.
Dr. Johnson (after Sir Joshua Reynolds) Do. Vol. V.

THE

LIFE

OF

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL. D.

SAMUEL JOHNSON was born at Lichfield, in Staffordshire, on the 18th of September, N. S. 1709, [as he himself states, adding, "that his mother had a very difficult and dangerous labour, and was assisted by George Hector, a man-midwife of great reputation. He was born almost dead [1], and could not cry for some time."] His initiation into the Christian church was not delayed; for his baptism is recorded, in the register of St. Mary's parish in that city, to have been performed on the day of his birth: his father is there styled *Gentleman*, a circumstance of which an ignorant panegyrist has praised him for not being proud; when the truth is, that the appellation of Gentleman, though now lost in the indiscriminate assumption of *Esquire*, was commonly taken by those who could not boast of gentility [2]. His father was Michael Johnson, a native of Derbyshire, of obscure extraction, who settled in Lichfield as a bookseller and

Account of Life, p. 9.

[1] [To have been born *almost dead* has been related of many eminent men, amongst others of Addison, Lord Lyttelton, and Voltaire.—ED.]

[2] [The title *Gentleman* had still, in 1709, some degree of its original meaning, and as Mr. Johnson served the office of sheriff of Lichfield in that year, he seems to have been fully entitled to it. The Doctor, at his entry on the books of Pembroke college, and at his matriculation, designated himself as *filius generosi*.—ED.]

Account of Life, p. 2.

stationer[1]. [He—being that year sheriff of Lichfield, and to ride the circuit of the county the day after his son's birth, which was a ceremony then performed with great pomp, was asked by Mrs. Johnson, "whom he would invite to the *Riding?*" and answered, "all the town *now*." He feasted the citizens with uncommon magnificence, and was the last but one that maintained the splendour of the *Riding*.] His mother was Sarah Ford, descended of an ancient race of substantial yeomanry in Warwickshire; [Mrs. Piozzi states her to have been the daughter of a gentleman in the country, such as there were many of in those days, who possessing, perhaps, one or two hundred pounds a year in land, lived on the profits, and sought

Piozzi, p. 9.

[There seems some difficulty in arriving at a satisfactory opinion as to Michael Johnson's real condition and circumstances. That in the latter years of his life he was poor, is certain; and Doctor Johnson (in the "Account of his early Life," not only admits the general fact of *poverty*, but gives several instances of what may be called *indigence*: yet, on the other hand, there is evidence that for near fifty years he occupied a respectable rank amongst his fellow-citizens, and appears in the annals of Lichfield on occasions not bespeaking poverty. In 1687, a subscription for recasting the cathedral bells was set on foot, headed by the bishop, dean, &c. aided by the neighbouring gentry: Michael Johnson's name stands the twelfth in the list; and his contribution, though only 10*s.*, was not comparatively contemptible; for no one, except the bishop and dean, gave so much as 10*l.* Baronets and knights gave a guinea or two, and the great body of the contributors gave less than Johnson. (*Harwood's Lichfield*, p. 69.) In 1694, we find him burying in the cathedral, and placing a marble stone over a young woman in whose fate he was interested. His house, a handsome one, and in one of the best situations in the town, was his own freehold; and he appears to have added to it, for we find in the books of the corporation the following entry: "1708, July 13. Agreed, that Mr. Michael Johnson, bookseller, have a lease of his encroachment of his house in Sadler's-street, for forty years, at 2*s.* 6*d.* per an." And this lease, at the expiration of the forty years, was renewed to the Doctor as a mark of the respect of his fellow-citizens. In 1709, Michael Johnson served the office of sheriff of the county of the city of Lichfield. In 1718, he was elected junior bailiff; and in 1725, senior bailiff, or chief magistrate. Thus respected and apparently thriving in Lichfield, the following extract of a letter, written by the Rev. George Plaxton, chaplain to Lord Gower, will show the high estimation in which the father of our great moralist was held in the neighbouring country: "Trentham, St. Peter's day, 1716. Johnson, the Lichfield librarian, is now here; he propagates learning all over this diocese, and advanceth knowledge to its just height; all the clergy here are his pupils, and suck all they have from him; Allen cannot make a warrant without his precedent, nor our quondam John Evans draw a recognizance *sine directione Michaelis*." (*Gentleman's Magazine, October*, 1791.) On the whole, it seems probable that the growing expenses of a family, and losses in trade, had in his latter years reduced Mr. Johnson, from the state of competency which he had before enjoyed, to very narrow circumstances.—ED.]

not to increase their income.] They were well advanced in years when they married, [he past fifty, and she above forty,] and never had more than two children, both sons; Samuel, their first-born, who lived to be the illustrious character whose various excellence I am to endeavour to record, and Nathanael, who died in his twenty-fifth year[1], [and of whose manly spirit Mrs. Piozzi heard his brother speak with pride and pleasure. The two brothers did not, however, much delight in each other's company, being always rivals for their mother's fondness; and many of the severe reflections on domestic life in Rasselas took their source from its author's keen recollections of his early years.] Piozzi, p. 5. Piozzi, p. 5, 6.

Mr. Michael Johnson was a man of a large and robust body, and of a strong and active mind; yet, as in the most solid rocks veins of unsound substance are often discovered, there was in him a mixture of that disease, the nature of which eludes the most minute inquiry, though the effects are well known to be a weariness of life, an unconcern about those things which agitate the greater part of mankind, and a general sensation of gloomy wretchedness. From him then his son inherited, with some other qualities, "a vile melancholy," which in his too strong expression of any disturbance of the mind, "made him mad all his life, at least not sober[2]." Sept. 16, 1773.

[1] Nathanael was born in 1712, and died in 1737. Their father, Michael Johnson, was born at Cubley in Derbyshire, in 1656, and died at Lichfield, in 1731, at the age of seventy-six. Sarah Ford, his wife, was born at King's Norton, in the county of Worcester, in 1669, and died at Lichfield in January, 1759, in her ninetieth year.—King's Norton Dr. Johnson supposed to be in Warwickshire (see his inscription for his mother's tomb), but it is in Worcestershire, probably on the confines of the county of Warwick.—MALONE.

[2] [*One* of the most curious and important chapters in the history of the human mind is still to be written, that of hereditary insanity. The symptomatic facts by which the disease might be traced are generally either disregarded from ignorance of their real cause and character, or when observed, carefully suppressed by domestic or professional delicacy. This is natural and even laudable; yet there are several important reasons why the obscurity in which such facts are usually buried may be regretted. *Morally*, we should wish

Piozzi, p. 2, 5.

[The elder Johnson was, as his son informed Mrs. Piozzi, a very pious and worthy man, but wrong-headed, positive, and afflicted with melancholy: his business, however, leading him to be much on horse-back, contributed to the preservation of his bodily health, and mental sanity; which, when he stayed long at home, would sometimes be about to give way; and Dr. Johnson said, that when his workshop, a detached building, had fallen half down for want of money to repair it, his father was not less diligent to lock the door every night, though he saw that any body might walk in at the back part, and knew that there was no security obtained by barring the front door. "*This* (said his son) was madness, you may see, and would have been discoverable in other instances of the prevalence of imagination, but that poverty prevented it from playing such tricks as riches and leisure encourage." Michael was a man of still larger size and greater strength than his son, who was reckoned very like him, but did not delight in talking much of his family—"One has (says he) *so* little pleasure in reciting the anecdotes of beggary!" One day, however, hearing Mrs. Piozzi praise a favourite friend: "Why do you like that man's acquaintance so?" said he. "Because," replied she, "he is open and confiding, and tells me

to know, as far as may be permitted to us, the nature of our own intellect, its powers and its weaknesses;—*medically*, it might be possible, by early and systematic treatment, to avert or mitigate the disease which, there is reason to suppose, is now often unknown or mistaken;—*legally*, it would be desirable to have any additional means of discriminating between guilt and misfortune, and of ascertaining with more precision the nice bounds which divide moral guilt from what may be called physical errors;—and in the highest and most important of all the springs of human thought or action, it would be consolatory and edifying to be able to distinguish with greater certainty rational faith and judicious piety, from the enthusiastic confidence or the gloomy despondence of disordered imaginations. The memory of every man who has lived, not inattentively, in society, will furnish him with instances to which these considerations might have been usefully applied. But in reading the life of Doctor Johnson (who was conscious of the disease and of its cause, and of whose blood there remains no one whose feelings can be now offended), they should be kept constantly in view; not merely as a subject of general interest, but as elucidating and explaining many of the errors, peculiarities, and weaknesses of that extraordinary man.—Ed.]

stories of his uncles and cousins: I love the light parts of a solid character." "Nay, if you are for family history (said Dr. Johnson, good-humouredly), *I* can fit you: I had an uncle, Cornelius Ford, who, upon a journey, stopped and read an inscription written on a stone he saw standing by the way-side, set up, as it proved, in honour of a man who had leaped a certain leap thereabouts, the extent of which was specified upon the stone: Why now, said my uncle, I could leap it in my boots; and he did leap it in his boots. I had likewise another uncle, Andrew (continued he), my father's brother, who kept the ring in Smithfield, where they wrestled and boxed, for a whole year, and never was thrown or conquered. Here now are [1] uncles for you, *mistress*[2], if that's the way to your heart."] Piozzi, p. 2, 5.

[1] [Miss Seward, who latterly showed a great deal of malevolence towards Johnson, delighted to repeat a story that one of his uncles had suffered the last penalty of the law. "Shortly after Mr. Porter's death, Johnson asked his mother's consent to marry the old widow. After expressing her surprise at a request so extraordinary—'No, Sam, my willing consent you will never have to so preposterous a union. You are not twenty-five, and she is turned fifty. If she had any prudence, this request had never been made to me. Where are your means of subsistence? Porter has died poor, in consequence of his wife's expensive habits. You have great talents, but as yet have turned them into no profitable channel.'—'Mother, I have not deceived Mrs. Porter; I have told her the worst of me; that I am of mean extraction; that I have no money; and that I have had an uncle hanged.' She replied, 'that she valued no one more or less for his descent; that she had no more money than myself; and that, though she had not had a relation hanged, she had fifty who deserved hanging.'"—(*Seward's Letters*, vol. i, p. 45.) This account was given to Mr. Boswell, who, as Miss Seward could not have known it of her own knowledge, asked the lady for her authority. Miss Seward, in reply, quoted Mrs. Cobb, an old friend of Johnson's, who resided at Lichfield. To her, then, Boswell addressed himself; and, to his equal satisfaction and surprise, was answered that Mrs. Cobb had not only never told such a story, but that she had not even ever heard of it.—(*Gent. Mag.* vol. 63, p. 1009.) It is painful to have to add, that notwithstanding this denial, Miss Seward persisted in her story to the last. The report as to the *hanging* was probably derived from a coarse passage in the Rev. Donald M'Nicol's Remarks on Dr. Johnson's Journey to the Hebrides. "But whatever the Doctor may insinuate about the present scarcity of trees in Scotland, we are much deceived by fame if a very near ancestor of his, who was a native of that country, did not find to his cost that a *tree* was not quite such a rarity in *his* days." (P. 18. ed. 1779.) That some Scotchman, of the name of *Johnston*, may have been hanged in the seventeenth century, is very likely; but there seems no reason whatsoever to believe that any of Dr. Johnson's family were natives of Scotland.—ED.]

[2] [The reader is requested to observe, that Dr. Johnson used familiarly to designate Mrs. Thrale (Piozzi) as his "*mistress*."—ED.]

[Of some other members of his family he gave the following account:

Account of Life, p. 27. "This Whitsuntide (1719), I and my brother were sent to pass some time at Birmingham; I believe a fortnight. Why such boys were sent to trouble other homes, I cannot tell. My mother had some opinion that much improvement was to be had by changing the mode of life. My uncle, Harrison, was a widower; and his house was kept by Sally Ford, a young woman of such sweetness of temper, that I used to say she had no fault. We lived most at uncle Ford's, being much caressed by my aunt, a good-natured, coarse woman, easy of converse, but willing to find something to censure in the absent. My uncle, Harrison, did not much like us, nor did we like him. He was a very mean and vulgar man, drunk every night, but drunk with little drink; very peevish, very proud, very ostentatious, but, luckily, not rich. At my aunt Ford's I eat so much of a boiled leg of mutton[1], that she used to talk of it. My mother, who had lived in a narrow sphere, and was then affected by little things, told me seriously that it would be hardly ever forgotten. Her mind, I think, was afterwards very much enlarged, or greater evils wore out the care of less.

"I staid after the vacation was over some days; and remember, when I wrote home, that I desired the horses to come on Thursday of the first school week; and not till then. I was much pleased with a rattle to my whip, and wrote of it to my mother.

"When my father came to fetch us home, he told

[1] [All these trifles—since Dr. Johnson in the height of his fame (for the *Account* must have been written subsequent to 1768) thought them worth recording—appear worth quoting. It will be seen hereafter that his voracious love of a *leg of mutton* adhered to him through life; and the prophecy of his mother, that it *never would be forgotten*, is realised in a way the good woman could not have anticipated.—Ed.]

the ostler that he had twelve miles home, and two boys under his care. This offended me. He had then a watch[1], which he returned when he was to pay for it."] Michael Johnson was, however, forced by the narrowness of his circumstances to be very diligent in business, not only in his shop, but by occasionally resorting to several towns in the neighbourhood, some of which were at a considerable distance from Lichfield. At that time booksellers' shops in the provincial towns of England were very rare, so that there was not one even in Birmingham, in which town old Mr. Johnson used to open a shop every market-day. He was a pretty good Latin scholar, and a citizen so creditable as to be made [as has been stated] one of the magistrates of Lichfield; and, being a man of good sense, and skill in his trade, he acquired a reasonable share of wealth, of which however he afterwards lost the greatest part, by engaging unsuccessfully in a manufacture of parchment. [In this undertaking, nothing prospered; they had no sooner bought a large stock of skins, than a heavy duty was laid upon that article, and from Michael's absence by his many avocations as a bookseller, the parchment business was committed to a faithless servant, and thence they gradually declined into strait circumstances[2].] He was a zealous high-church man

Account of Life, p. 29.

[1] [The convenience of a watch, now so general, Doctor Johnson himself, as Sir J. Hawkins reports (p. 460), did not possess till 1768.—ED.]

[2] [Johnson, in his Dictionary, defines "EXCISE, a hateful tax, levied upon commodities, and adjudged not by the *common judges* of property, but by *wretches* hired by those to whom excise is paid;" and in the Idler (No. 65), he calls a *Commissioner of Excise* "one of the *lowest* of all human beings." This violence of language seems so little reasonable, that the Editor was induced to suspect some cause of *personal animosity*; this mention of the trade in parchment (an *exciseable* article) afforded a clue, which has led to the confirmation of that suspicion. In the records of the Excise Board is to be found the following letter, addressed to the supervisor of excise at Lichfield: "July 27, 1725.—The Commissioners received yours of the 22d instant, and since the justices would not give judgment against Mr. Michael Johnson, *the tanner*, notwithstanding the facts were fairly against him, the Board direct that the next time he offends, you do not lay an information against him, but send an

and royalist, and retained his attachment to the unfortunate house of Stuart, though he reconciled himself by casuistical arguments of expediency and necessity, to take the oaths imposed by the prevailing power.

There is a circumstance in his life somewhat[1] romantick, but so well authenticated, that I shall not omit it. A young woman of Leek, in Staffordshire, while he served his apprenticeship there, conceived a violent passion for him; and though it met with no favourable return, followed him to Lichfield, where she took lodgings opposite to the house in which he lived, and indulged her hopeless flame. When he was informed that it so preyed upon her mind that her life was in danger, he, with a generous humanity, went to her and offered to marry her, but it was then too late: her vital power was exhausted; and she actually exhibited one of the very rare instances of dying for love. She was buried in the cathedral of Lichfield; and he, with a tender regard, placed a stone over her grave with this inscription:

Here lies the body of
Mrs. ELIZABETH BLANEY, a stranger:
She departed this life
20 of September, 1694.

Piozzi, p. 6. Johnson's mother [was slight in her person, and rather below than above the common size. So excel-

affidavit of the fact, that he may be prosecuted in the Exchequer." It does not appear whether he offended again, but here is a sufficient cause of his son's animosity against Commissioners of Excise, and of the allusion in the Dictionary to the *special* jurisdiction under which that revenue is administered. The reluctance of the justices to convict will appear not unnatural, when it is recollected that M. Johnson was, *this very year*, chief magistrate of the city. —ED.]

[1] [The *romantic* part of this story does not seem otherwise *authenticated* than by an assertion in the Gentleman's Magazine, vol. 55, p. 100, on, as it would seem, the doubtful authority of Miss Seward, that Doctor Johnson had told it. Admitting that he did so, it is to be observed that the fact happened *fifteen years* before his birth; and his father may be excused if he gave to his wife and son a *romantic* account of an affair of this nature. Such delicacy of sentiment and conduct as is here ascribed to these young and humble lovers is, it is to be feared, very rare in persons of any age or station, and would seem to require better *authentication* than can be found for the *details* of this story.—ED.]

lent was her character, and so blameless her life, that when an oppressive neighbour once endeavoured to take from her a little field she possessed, he could persuade no attorney to undertake the cause against a woman so beloved in her narrow circle: and it is this incident he alludes to in the line of his Vanity of Human Wishes, calling her. Piozzi, p. 6.

The general favourite as the general friend.

Nor could any one pay more willing homage to such a character, though she had not been related to him, than did Dr. Johnson on every occasion that offered: his disquisition on Pope's epitaph placed over Mrs. Corbet, is a proof of that preference always given by him to a noiseless life over a bustling one.] She was a woman of distinguished understanding. [It was not, however, Mr. Malone observes, much cultivated, as may be collected from Dr. Johnson's own account. "My father and mother (said he) had not much happiness from each other. She had no value for his relations; those indeed whom we knew of were much lower than hers. This contempt began, I know not on which side, very early; but as my father was little at home it had not much effect. They seldom conversed; for my father could not bear to talk of his affairs; and my mother, *being unacquainted with books*, cared not to talk of any thing else. Had my mother been more literate, they had been better companions. She might have sometimes introduced her unwelcome topick with more success, if she could have diversified her conversation. Of business she had no distinct conception; and therefore her discourse was composed only of complaint, fear, and suspicion. Neither of them ever tried to calculate the profits of trade, or the expenses of living. My mother concluded that we Account of Life, p. 14.

Account of Life, p. 14. were poor, because we lost by some of our trades; but the truth was, that my father, having in the early part of his life contracted debts, never had trade sufficient to enable him to pay them, and to maintain his family: he got something, but not enough. My father considered tea as very expensive, and discouraged my mother from keeping company with the neighbours, and from paying visits or receiving them. She lived to say, many years after, that if the time were to pass again, she would not comply with such unsocial injunctions. It was not till about 1768, that I thought to calculate the returns of my father's trade, and by that estimate his probable profits. This, I believe, my parents never did."] I asked his old school-fellow, Mr. Hector, surgeon of Birmingham, if she was not vain of her son. He said, "she had too much good sense to be vain, but she knew her son's value." Her piety was not inferior to her understanding; and to her must be inscribed those early impressions of religion upon the mind of her son, from which the world afterwards derived so much benefit. He told me[1], that he remembered distinctly having had the first notice of heaven, "a place to which good people went," and hell, "a place to which bad people went," communicated to him by her, when a little child in bed with her; and that it might be the better fixed in his memory, she sent him to repeat it to Thomas Jackson, their man-servant[2]; he not being in the way, this was not done; but there was no occasion for any artificial aid for its preservation. [When he related this cir-

Piozzi, p. 21, 22.

[1] [This is told nearly in the same words in the *Account of the Life*, and is an additional proof of the authenticity of that little work.—ED.]

[2] [Mrs. Piozzi says a *workman*, and, in this instance, her account is more likely to be accurate than Boswell's. This trifle is observed to justify thus early the editor's opinion, that even in the small matters in which Boswell delights to accuse Mrs. Piozzi of inaccuracy, she is sometimes probably as correct as he is.—ED.]

cumstance to Mrs. Piozzi, he added, that little people should be encouraged always to tell whatever they hear particularly striking, to some brother, sister, or servant, immediately before the impression is erased by the intervention of newer occurrences.] Piozzi, p. 21, 22.

In following so very eminent a man from his cradle to his grave, every minute particular, which can throw light on the progress of his mind, is interesting. That he was remarkable, even in his earliest years, may easily be supposed; for to use his own words in his Life of Sydenham, "That the strength of his understanding, the accuracy of his discernment, and the ardour of his curiosity, might have been remarked from his infancy, by a diligent observer, there is no reason to doubt. For there is no instance of any man, whose history has been minutely related, that did not in every part of life discover the same proportion of intellectual vigour."

In all such investigations it is certainly unwise to pay too much attention to incidents which the credulous relate with eager satisfaction, and the more scrupulous or witty inquirer considers only as topicks of ridicule: yet there is a traditional story of the infant Hercules of Toryism, so curiously characteristick, that I shall not withhold it. It was communicated to me in a letter from Miss Mary Adye, of Lichfield.

"When Dr. Sacheverel was at Lichfield, Johnson was not quite three years old. My grandfather Hammond observed him at the cathedral perched upon his father's shoulders, listening and gaping at the much celebrated preacher. Mr. Hammond asked Mr. Johnson how he could possibly think of bringing such an infant to church, and in the midst of so great a crowd. He answered, because it was impossible to keep him at home; for, young as he was, he believed he had caught the publick spirit and zeal for Sache-

verel, and would have staid for ever in the church, satisfied with beholding him[1]."

Nor can I omit a little instance of that jealous independence of spirit, and impetuosity of temper, which never forsook him. The fact was acknowledged to me by himself, upon the authority of his mother. One day, when the servant who used to be sent to school to conduct him home had not come in time, he set out by himself, though he was then so near-sighted, that he was obliged to stoop down on his hands and knees to take a view of the kennel before he ventured to step over it. His school-mistress, afraid that he might miss his way, or fall into the kennel, or be run over by a cart, followed him at some distance. He happened to turn about and perceive her. Feeling her careful attention as an insult to his manliness, he ran back to her in a rage, and beat her, as well as his strength would permit[2].

Of the power of his memory, for which he was all his life eminent to a degree almost incredible, the following early instance was told me in his presence at Lichfield, in 1776, by his step-daughter, Mrs. Lucy Porter, as related to her by his mother. When he was a child in petticoats, and had learnt to read, Mrs. Johnson one morning put the common prayer-book into his hands, pointed to the collect for the day, and said, "Sam, you must get this by heart." She went up stairs, leaving him to study it: but by

[1] [The gossiping anecdotes of the Lichfield ladies are all apocryphal. Sacheverel, by his sentence pronounced in Feb. 1710, was interdicted for three years from preaching; so that he could not have preached at Lichfield while Johnson was under three years of age. But what decides the falsehood of Miss Adye's story is, that Sacheverel's triumphal progress through the midland counties was in 1710; and it appears by the books of the corporation of Lichfield, that he was received in that town and complimented by the attendance of the corporation, "and a present of three dozen of wine," on the 16th June, 1710; when the "*infant Hercules of toryism*" was just *nine months* old.—Ed.]

[2] [This story seems also disproved by internal evidence, for if Johnson was so blind as not to be able to see a kennel without stooping on his hands and knees, how could he distinguish a person following him *at some distance*?—Ed.]

the time she had reached the second floor, she heard him following her. "What's the matter?" said she. "I can say it," he replied; and repeated it distinctly, though he could not have read it more than twice.

But there has been another story of his infant precocity generally circulated, and generally believed, the truth of which I am to refute upon his own authority. It is told, that, when a child of three years old, he chanced to tread upon a duckling, the eleventh of a brood, and killed it; upon which, it is said, he dictated to his mother the following epitaph:

"Here lies good master duck,
Whom Samuel Johnson trod on;
If it had lived, it had been *good luck*,
For then we 'd had an *odd one*."

There is surely internal evidence that this little composition combines in it, what no child of three years old could produce, without an extension of its faculties by immediate inspiration; yet Mrs. Lucy Porter, Dr. Johnson's step-daughter, positively maintained to me, in his presence, that there could be no doubt of the truth of this anecdote, for she had heard it from his mother. So difficult is it to obtain an authentick relation of facts, and such authority may there be for errour; for he assured me, that his father made the verses, and wished to pass them for his child's. He added, "my father was a foolish old man; that is to say, foolish in talking of his children[1]." [He always seemed more mortified at the recollection of the bustle his parents made with his wit, than pleased with the thoughts of possessing it. "That (said he one day to Mrs. Piozzi) is the great misery of late marriages; the unhappy produce of them becomes the plaything

Piozzi, p. 8, 9.

[1] [This anecdote of the duck, though disproved by internal and external evidence, is one of those the authenticity of which Miss Seward persisted in asserting; and she maintained a very wrongheaded hostility and paper war with Boswell on this and a similar subject (*The verses on a sprig of myrtle*), in which, as we shall see more fully hereafter, she was wrong every way.—ED.]

Piozzi, p. 8, 9. of dotage: an old man's child (continued he) leads much such a life, I think, as a little boy's dog, teased with awkward fondness, and forced, perhaps, to sit up and beg, as we call it, to divert a company, who at last go away complaining of their disagreeable entertainment." In consequence of these maxims, and full of indignation against such parents as delight to produce their young ones early into the talking world, I have known Dr. Johnson give a good deal of pain by refusing to hear the verses that children could recite, or the songs they could sing; particularly to one friend who told him that his two sons should repeat Gray's Elegy to him alternately, that he might judge who had the happiest cadence. "No, pray, sir (said he), let the little dears both speak it at once; more noise will by that means be made, and the noise will be sooner over."]

Young Johnson had the misfortune to be much afflicted with the scrophula, or king's-evil, which disfigured a countenance naturally well formed, and hurt his visual nerves so much, that he did not see at all with one of his eyes, though its appearance was little different from that of the other. There is amongst his prayers, one inscribed "*When my* EYE *was restored to its use*," which ascertains a defect that many of his friends knew he had, though I never perceived it[1]. I supposed him to be only near-sighted; and indeed I must observe, that in no other respect could I discern any defect in his vision; on the contrary, the force of his attention and perceptive quickness made him see and distinguish all manner of objects, whether of nature or of art, with a nicety that is rarely to be found. When he and I were travelling in the Highlands of Scotland, and I pointed

Prayers and Med. p. 27.

[1] Speaking himself of the imperfection of one of his eyes, he said to Dr. Burney, "the dog was never good for much."—BURNEY.

out to him a mountain, which I observed resembled a cone, he corrected my inaccuracy, by showing me, that it was indeed pointed at the top, but that one side of it was larger than the other. And the ladies with whom he was acquainted agree, that no man was more nicely and minutely critical in the elegance of female dress. When I found that he saw the romantick beauties of Ilam, in Derbyshire, much better than I did, I told him that he resembled an able performer upon a bad instrument. How false and contemptible then are all the remarks which have been made to the prejudice either of his candour or of his philosophy, founded upon a supposition that he was almost blind. It has been said that he contracted this grievous malady from his nurse. [His own account was, that Dr. Swinfen[1] told him, that the scrofulous sores which afflicted him proceeded from the bad humours of his nurse, whose son had the same distemper, and was likewise short-sighted, but both in a less degree (than he). His mother thought his diseases derived from her family[2]. She visited him every day, and used to go different ways, that her assiduity might not expose her to ridicule, and often left her fan or glove behind, that she might have a pretence for coming back unexpected, but she never discovered any token of neglect. In ten weeks he was taken home a poor diseased infant, almost blind. Dr. Swinfen used to say, that he never knew any child reared with so much difficulty.] His mother,—yielding to the superstitious notion which, it is wonderful to think, prevailed so long in this country, as to the virtue of the regal touch; a notion which

Account of Life, p. 11.

[1] [Samuel Swinfen, who took a degree of doctor of medicine from Pembroke College in 1712.—HALL.]

[2] [His mother and Dr. Swinfen were both perhaps wrong in their conjecture as to the origin of the disease; he more probably inherited it from his father, with the *morbid melancholy* which is so commonly an attendant on scrofulous habits.—ED.]

Account of Life, p. 16. our kings encouraged, and to which a man of such inquiry and such judgment as Carte could give credit—carried him to London [in Lent, 1712], where he was actually touched by queen Anne. Mrs. Johnson indeed, as Mr. Hector informed me, acted by the advice of the celebrated Sir John Floyer, then a physician in Lichfield. Johnson used to talk of this very frankly; and Mrs. Piozzi has preserved his very picturesque description of the scene, as it remained upon his fancy. Being asked if he could remember queen Piozzi, p. 10. Anne,—"He had (he said) a confused, but somehow a sort of solemn recollection of a lady in diamonds, and a long black hood." This touch, however, was without any effect. I ventured to say to him, in allusion to the political principles in which he was educated, and of which he ever retained some odour, that "his mother had not carried him far enough; she should have taken him to ROME[1]."

[The following is his own recollection of this jour-
Account of Life, p. 16. ney.—"I was taken to London to be touched for the evil by queen Anne. I always retained some memory of this journey, though I was then but thirty months old. I remember a boy crying at the palace when I went to be touched. My mother was at Nicholson's, the famous bookseller in Little Britain. I remembered a little dark room behind the kitchen, where the jack-weight fell through a hole in the floor, into which I once slipped my leg.

"Being asked, 'on which side of the shop was the counter?' I answered, 'on the left from the entrance,' many years after, and spoke, not by guess but by memory. We went in the stage-coach, and returned in the waggon, as my mother said, because my cough was violent. The hope of saving a few shillings was no slight motive; for she, not having

[1] [To the *Pretender*.—ED.]

been accustomed to money, was afraid of such expenses as now seem very small. She sewed two guineas in her petticoat, lest she should be robbed. Account of Life, p. 16.

"We were troublesome to the passengers; but to suffer such inconveniences in the stage-coach was common in these days, to persons in much higher rank. She bought me a small silver cup and spoon, marked SAM. J., lest if they had been marked S. J., (Sarah being her name), they should, upon her death, have been taken from me. She bought me a speckled linen frock, which I knew afterwards by the name of my London frock. The cup was one of the last pieces of plate which dear[1] Tetty sold in our distress. I have now the spoon. She bought at the same time two tea-spoons, and till my manhood she had no more[2]."]

He was first taught to read English by Dame Oliver, a widow, who kept a school for young children in Lichfield. He told me she could read the black letter, and asked him to borrow for her, from his father, a bible in that character. When he was going to Oxford, she came to take leave of him, brought him, in the simplicity of her kindness, a present of gingerbread, and said he was the best scholar she ever had. He delighted in mentioning this early compliment; adding, with a smile, that "this was as high a proof of his merit as he could conceive." His next instructor in English was a master, whom when he spoke of him to me, he familiarly called Tom Brown, who, said he, "published

[1] [His wife, whom he called by this familiar contraction of Elizabeth —Ed.]

[2] [When Dr. Johnson, at an advanced age, recorded all these minute circumstances, he contemplated, we are told, writing the history of his own life, and probably intended to develope, from his own infant recollections, the growth and powers of the faculty of memory, which he possessed in so remarkable a degree. From the little details of his domestic history he perhaps meant also to trace the progressive change in the habits of the middle classes of society. But whatever may have been his motive, the Editor could not properly omit what Johnson thought worth preserving —Ed.]

a spelling-book, and dedicated it to the UNIVERSE; but, I fear, no copy of it can now be had."

He began to learn Latin with Mr. Hawkins, usher or under-master of Lichfield school, "a man (said he) very skilful in his little way." With him he continued two years, and [perhaps, four months. "The time," he added, "till I had computed it, appeared much longer by the multitude of incidents and of novelties which it supplied, than many important thoughts which it produced. Perhaps it is not possible that any other period can make the same impression on the memory." In the spring of 1719, his class was removed to the upper school, and put under Holdbrook, a peevish and ill-tempered man. They were removed sooner than had been the custom, for the head-master, intent on his boarders, generally left the town-boys too long in the lower school; the earlier removal of Johnson's class was caused by a reproof of the town-clerk; and Hawkins complained that he had lost half his profit. At this removal Johnson says that *he* cried, but the rest were indifferent. He] then rose to be under the care of Mr. Hunter[1], the head-master, who, according to his account, "was very severe, and wrong-headedly severe. He used (said he) to beat us unmercifully; and he did not distinguish between ignorance and negligence; for he would beat a boy equally for not knowing a thing, as for neglecting to know it. He would ask a boy a question, and if he did not answer it, he would beat

Account of Life, p. 25, 26.

[1] ["Mr. Hunter was an odd mixture of the pedant and the sportsman; he was a very severe disciplinarian and a great setter of game. Happy was the boy who could inform his offended master where a covey of partridges was to be found; this notice was a certain pledge of his pardon."—*Davies' Life of Garrick*, vol. i. p. 3. He was a prebendary in the Cathedral of Lichfield, and grandfather to Miss Seward. One of this lady's complaints against Johnson was, that he, in all his works, never expressed any *gratitude* to his preceptor. It does not appear that he owed him much; for besides the severity of his discipline, it seems that he was inattentive to that class of boys to which Johnson belonged, and it also appears, that he refused to readmit him after one of the vacations, on some pretence now forgotten.—ED.]

him, without considering whether he had an opportunity of knowing how to answer it. For instance, he would call up a boy and ask him Latin for a candlestick, which the boy could not expect to be asked. Now, sir, if a boy could answer every question, there would be no need of a master to teach him."

It is, however, but justice to the memory of Mr. Hunter to mention, that though he might err in being too severe, the school of Lichfield was very respectable in his time. The late Dr. Taylor, Prebendary of Westminster, who was educated under him, told me that "he was an excellent master, and that his ushers were most of them men of eminence; that Holdbrook, one of the most ingenious men, best scholars, and best preachers of his age, was usher during the greatest part of the time that Johnson was at school. Then came Hague, of whom as much might be said, with the addition that he was an elegant poet. Hague was succeeded by Green, afterwards Bishop of Lincoln, whose character in the learned world is well known. In the same form with Johnson was Congreve, who afterwards became chaplain to Archbishop Boulter, and by that connexion obtained good preferment in Ireland. He was a younger son of the ancient family of Congreve, in Staffordshire, of which the poet was a branch. His brother sold the estate. There was also Lowe, afterwards Canon of Windsor.

Indeed Johnson was very sensible how much he owed to Mr. Hunter. Mr. Langton one day asked him how he had acquired so accurate a knowledge of Latin, in which, I believe, he was exceeded by no man of his time: he said, "My master whipt me very well. Without that, sir, I should have done nothing." He told Mr. Langton, that while Hunter was flogging his boys unmercifully, he used to say,

"And this I do to save you from the gallows." Johnson, upon all occasions, expressed his approbation of enforcing instruction by means of the rod[1]. I would rather (said he) have the rod to be the general terror to all, to make them learn, than tell a child, if you do thus or thus, you will be more esteemed than your brothers or sisters. The rod produces an effect which terminates in itself. A child is afraid of being whipped, and gets his task, and there 's an end on 't; whereas, by exciting emulation and comparisons of superiority, you lay the foundation of lasting mischief: you make brothers and sisters hate each other."

When Johnson saw some young ladies in Lincolnshire who were remarkably well behaved, owing to their mother's strict discipline and severe correction, he exclaimed, in one of Shakspeare's lines, a little varied[2],

"*Rod*, I will honour thee for this thy duty."

Piozzi, p. 21. [Yet when talking of a young fellow, who used to come often to Mr. Thrale's house, who was about fifteen years old or less, and had a manner at once sullen and sheepish—"That lad (said Johnson) looks like the son of a schoolmaster; which (added he) is one of the very worst conditions of childhood; such a boy has no father, or worse than none; he never can reflect on his parent but the reflection brings to his mind some idea of pain inflicted, or of sorrow suffered."

Piozzi, p 16. He was, indeed, himself exceedingly disposed to the general indulgence of children, and was even

[1] Johnson's observations to Dr. Rose, on this subject, may be found in a subsequent part of this work, near the end of the year 1775.—BURNEY.

[2] More than a little. The line is in KING HENRY VI. Part ii. act iv. sc. last:

"Sword, I will hallow thee for this thy deed."—MALONE.

[It is to be hoped that Mr. Boswell was mistaken as to the sex and age of the children: the idea of disciplining *young ladies* by the rod is absurd and disgusting.—ED.]

scrupulously and ceremoniously attentive not to offend them: he had strongly persuaded himself of the difficulty people always find to erase early impressions, either of kindness or resentment, and said, "he should never have so loved his mother when a man, had she not given him coffee she could ill afford, to gratify his appetite when a boy." "If you had had children, sir," said Mrs. Piozzi, "would you have taught them any thing?" "I hope (replied he) that I should have willingly lived on bread and water to obtain instruction for them; but I would not have set their future friendship to hazard for the sake of thrusting into their heads knowledge of things for which they might not perhaps have either taste or necessity. You teach your daughters the diameters of the planets, and wonder when you have done that they do not delight in your company. No science can be communicated by mortal creatures without attention from the scholar; no attention can be obtained from children without the infliction of pain, and pain is never remembered without resentment." That something should be learned was, however, so certainly his opinion, that Mrs. Piozzi heard him say, that education had been often compared to agriculture, yet that it resembled it chiefly in this: "that if nothing is sown, no crop can be obtained."] Piozzi, p. 16,17.

That superiority over his fellows, which he maintained with so much dignity in his march through life, was not assumed from vanity and ostentation, but was the natural and constant effect of those extraordinary powers of mind, of which he could not but be conscious by comparison; the intellectual difference, which in other cases of comparison of characters, is often a matter of undecided contest, being as clear in his case as the superiority of stature in some men above others. Johnson did not strut or stand on tip-

toe; he only did not stoop. From his earliest years, his superiority was perceived and acknowledged. He was from the beginning Αναξ ανδρῶν, a king of men. His schoolfellow, Mr. Hector, has obligingly furnished me[1] with many particulars of his boyish days; and assured me that he never knew him corrected[2] at school, but for talking and diverting other boys from their business. He seemed to learn by intuition; for though indolence and procrastination were inherent in his constitution, whenever he made an exertion he did more than any one else. In short, he is a memorable instance of what has been often observed, that the boy is the man in miniature; and that the distinguishing characteristicks of each individual are the same, through the whole course of life. His favourites used to receive very liberal assistance from him; and such was the submission and deference with which he was treated, such the desire to obtain his regard, that three of the boys, of whom Mr. Hector was sometimes one, used to come in the morning as his humble attendants, and carry him to school. One in the middle stooped, while he sat upon his back, and one on each side supported him; and thus he was borne triumphant. Such a proof of the early predominance of intellectual vigour is very remarkable, and does honour to human nature[3]. Talking to me once himself of his being much distinguished at school, he told me, "they never thought to raise me by comparing me to any one; they never said, Johnson is as good a scholar as such a one, but such a one is as

[1] [This is not quite candid on the part of Mr. Boswell. All these particulars are found in a paper furnished (it would seem) by Mr. Hector to Sir J. Hawkins, and published *in extenso* by *him*.—Ed.]

[2] [This is not consistent with Johnson's own statement, *ante*, p. 19.—Ed.]

[3] ["This ovation Mr. Boswell believed to have been an honour paid to the early predominance of his intellectual powers alone; but they who remember what boys are, and who consider that Johnson's corporeal prowess was by no means despicable, will be apt to suspect that the homage was enforced, at least as much by awe of the one as by admiration of the other."—*Anderson's Life of Johnson*.—Ed.]

good a scholar as Johnson; and this was said but of one—but of Lowe[1]; and I do not think he was as good a scholar."

He discovered a great ambition to excel, which roused him to counteract his indolence. He was uncommonly inquisitive; and his memory was so tenacious, that he never forgot any thing that he either heard or read. Mr. Hector remembers having recited to him eighteen verses, which, after a little pause, he repeated *verbatim*, varying only one epithet, by which he improved the line.

He never joined with the other boys in their ordinary diversions: his only amusement[2] was in winter, when he took a pleasure in being drawn upon the ice by a boy barefooted, who pulled him along by a garter fixed round him; no very easy operation, as his size was remarkably large. His defective sight, indeed, prevented him from enjoying the common sports; and he once pleasantly remarked to me, "how wonderfully well he had contrived to be idle without them." Lord Chesterfield, however, has justly observed in one of his letters, when earnestly cautioning a friend against the pernicious effects of idleness, that active sports are not to be reckoned idleness in young people; and that the listless torpor of doing nothing alone deserves that name. Of this dismal inertness of disposition, Johnson had all his life too great a share. Mr. Hector relates, that "he could not oblige him more than by sauntering away the hours of vacation in the fields, during which he was more engaged in talking to himself than to his com-

[1] [See *ante*, p. 19.—ED.]

[2] [Mr. Hector, in the paper printed by Hawkins, only says, "He never associated with any of us in *our* diversions, except in winter, when the ice was firm enough to be drawn along by a boy barefooted;" but this does not justify the absurd assertion that Johnson had *no* amusement whatsoever except in winter, and then only this *one*: other amusements he doubtless had, though probably not of a gregarious nature.—ED.]

Hawk. p. 8. panion." [Mr. Hector concludes by saying, "After a long absence from Lichfield, when he returned I was apprehensive of something wrong in his constitution, which might either impair his intellect or endanger his life, but, thanks to Almighty God, my fears have proved false."]

Dr. Percy, the Bishop of Dromore, who was long intimately acquainted with him, and has preserved a few anecdotes concerning him, regretting that he was not a more diligent collector, informs me, that "when a boy he was immoderately fond of reading romances of chivalry, and he retained his fondness for them through life[1]; so that (adds his lordship) spending part of a summer at my parsonage-house in the country, he chose for his regular reading the old Spanish romance of FELIXMARTE OF HIRCANIA, in folio, which he read quite through. Yet I have heard him attribute to these extravagant fictions that unsettled turn of mind which prevented his ever fixing in any profession."

Hawk. p. 8. [In the autumn of the year 1725, he received an invitation from his uncle[2], Cornelius Ford, to spend a few days with him at his house, which I conjecture to have been on a living of his in one of the counties bordering upon Staffordshire; but it seems that the uncle, discovering that the boy was possessed of uncommon parts, was unwilling to let him return, and to make up for the loss he might sustain by his absence from school, became his instructor in the classics, and farther assisted him in his studies; so

[1] [In one of his journeys we shall see (27th March, 1776), that he took with him "*Il Palmerino d'Inghilterra*" in *Italian*, but then it was for exercise in the *language*, and he took no pleasure in the work itself.—ED.]

[2] Cornelius Ford, according to Sir John Hawkins, was his cousin-german, being the son of Dr. Joseph [Q. Nathanael?] Ford, an eminent physician, who was brother to Johnson's mother.—MALONE. [Sir John Hawkins, in this passage of his first edition, distinctly calls *Cornelius* Ford his *uncle*, as Boswell also does, but it was probably an error, as Hawkins corrected it in the second edition to *cousin*.—ED.]

that it was not till the Whitsuntide following, that Johnson went back to Lichfield. Whether Mr. Hunter was displeased to find a visit of a few days protracted into a vacation of many months, or that he resented the interference of another person in the tuition of one of his scholars, and he one of the most promising of any under his care, cannot now be known; but, it seems, that at Johnson's return to Lichfield, he was not received into the school of that city;] and he was, at the age of fifteen, removed to the school of Stourbridge, in Worcestershire, of which Mr. Wentworth was then master. Hawk. p. 8.

This step was taken by the advice of his cousin, the Rev. Mr. Ford, a man in whom both talents and good dispositions were disgraced by licentiousness—(he is said to be the original of the parson in Hogarth's Modern Midnight Conversation[1])—but who was a very able judge of what was right. [Johnson always spoke of his cousin to Mrs. Piozzi with tenderness, praising his acquaintance with life and manners, and recollecting one piece of advice that no man surely ever followed more exactly: "Obtain (says Ford) some general principles of every science; he who can talk only on one subject, or act only in one department, is seldom wanted and perhaps never wished for; while the man of general knowledge can often benefit and always please." He used to relate, however, another story less to the credit of his cousin's penetration, how Ford on some occasion said to him, "You will Piozzi, p. 10.

[1] [This fact has been doubted; but the blameable levity of his character, Johnson himself admits. In his Life of Fenton, he mentions "Ford, a clergyman at that time too well known, whose abilities, instead of furnishing convivial merriment to the voluptuous and dissolute, might have enabled him to excel among the virtuous and the wise." In the *Historical Register* for 1731, we find, "Died Aug. 22, the Rev. Mr. Ford, well known to the world for his great wit and abilities." And the *Gentleman's Magazine* of the same date states that he was "esteemed for his polite and agreeable conversation." Mr. Murphy asserts that he was chaplain to Lord Chesterfield, but gives no authority.—ED.]

Piozzi, p. 11. make your way more easily in the world, I see, as you are contented to dispute no man's claim to conversation excellence; they will, therefore, more willingly allow your pretensions as a writer."]

At the school of Stourbridge he did not receive so much benefit as was expected. It has been said, that he acted in the capacity of an assistant to Mr. Wentworth in teaching the younger boys. "Mr. Wentworth (he told me) was a very able man, but an idle man, and to me very severe; but I cannot blame him much. I was then a big boy; he saw I did not reverence him; and that he should get no honour by me. I had brought enough with me, to carry me through; and all I should get at his school would be ascribed to my own labour, or to my former master. Yet he taught me a great deal."

He thus discriminated, to Dr. Percy, Bishop of Dromore, his progress at his two grammar-schools. "At one [Lichfield], I learned much in the school, but little from the master; in the other [Stourbridge], I learnt much from the master, but little in the school."

The bishop also informs me that "Dr. Johnson's father, before he was received at Stourbridge, applied to have him admitted as a scholar and assistant to the Rev. Samuel Lea, M. A., head-master of Newport school, in Shropshire (a very diligent good teacher, at that time in high reputation, under whom Mr. Hollis is said, in the Memoirs of his Life, to have been also educated)[1]. This application to Mr. Lea was not successful; but Johnson had afterwards the gratification to hear that the old gentleman, who lived to a very advanced age, mentioned it as one of the most memorable events of his life, that he was *very near* having that great man for his scholar."

[1] As was likewise the Bishop of Dromore many years afterwards.—Boswell.

He remained at Stourbridge little more than a year, and then he returned home, where he may be said to have loitered, for two years, in a state very unworthy his uncommon abilities. [His father was for some time at a loss how to dispose of him: he probably had a view to bring him up to his own trade; for Sir J. Hawkins heard Johnson say, that he himself was able to bind a book.] He had already given several proofs of his poetical genius, both in his school-exercises and in other occasional compositions. Of these I have obtained a considerable collection, by the favour of Mr. Wentworth, son of one of his masters, and of Mr. Hector, his schoolfellow and friend; from which I select some specimens [which will be found in the Appendix].

Hawk. p. 9.

The two years which he spent at home, after his return from Stourbridge, he passed in what he thought idleness, and was scolded by his father for his want of steady application. He had no settled plan of life, nor looked forward at all, but merely lived from day to day. Yet he read a great deal in a desultory manner, without any scheme of study, as chance threw books in his way, and inclination directed him through them. He used to mention one curious instance of his casual reading, when but a boy. Having imagined that his brother had hid some apples behind a large folio upon an upper shelf in his father's shop, he climbed up to search for them. There were no apples; but the large folio proved to be Petrarch[1], whom he had seen mentioned, in some preface, as one of the restorers of learning. His curiosity having been thus excited, he sat down with avidity, and read a great part of the book. What he read during these two years, he told me, was not works of mere amusement, "not

[1] [This was probably the folio edition of Petrarch's *Opera Omnia quæ extant*, *Bas.* 1554. It could have been only the *Latin* works that Johnson read, as there is no reason to suppose that he was, at this period, able to read Italian.—Ed.]

voyages and travels, but all literature, sir, all ancient writers, all manly: though but little Greek, only some of Anacreon and Hesiod: but in this irregular manner (added he) I had looked into a great many books, which were not commonly known at the Universities, where they seldom read any books but what are put into their hands by their tutors; so that when I came to Oxford, Dr. Adams, now master of Pembroke College, told me, I was the best qualified for the University that he had ever known come there."

In estimating the progress of his mind during these two years, as well as in future periods of his life, we must not regard his own hasty confession of idleness; for we see, when he explains himself, that he was acquiring various stores; and, indeed, he himself concluded the account, with saying, "I would not have you think I was doing nothing then." He might, perhaps, have studied more assiduously; but it may be doubted, whether such a mind as his was not more enriched by roaming at large in the fields of literature, than if it had been confined to any single spot. The analogy between body and mind is very general, and the parallel will hold as to their food, as well as any other particular. The flesh of animals who feed excursively is allowed to have a higher flavour than that of those who are cooped up. May there not be the same difference between men who read as their taste prompts, and men who are confined in cells and colleges to stated tasks[1]?

That a man in Mr Michael Johnson's circumstances should think of sending his son to the expensive university of Oxford, at his own charge,

[1] [Dr. Johnson's prodigious memory and talents enabled him to collect from desultory reading a vast mass of general information; but he was in no *science*, and indeed we might almost say in no branch of literature, what is usually called *a profound scholar*—that character is only to be earned by laborious study; and Mr. Boswell's fanciful allusion to the flavour of the flesh of animals seems fallacious, not to say foolish.—Ed.]

seems very improbable. The subject was too delicate to question Johnson upon; but I have been assured by Dr. Taylor, that the scheme never would have taken place, had not a gentleman of Shropshire, one of his schoolfellows, spontaneously undertaken to support him at Oxford, in the character of his companion: though, in fact, he never received any assistance whatever from that gentleman.

[Sir John Hawkins thus states this circumstance: A neighbouring gentleman, Mr. Andrew Corbett, having a son, who had been educated in the same school with Johnson, whom he was about to send to Pembroke College in Oxford, a proposal was made and accepted, that Johnson should attend this son thither, in quality of assistant in his studies; and accordingly, on the 31st day of October, 1728, they were both entered, Corbett as a gentleman commoner, and Johnson as a commoner. Whether it was discouragement in the outset of their studies, or any other ground of disinclination that moved him to it, is not known, but this is certain, that young Corbett could not brook submission to a man who seemed to be little more learned than himself, and that having a father living, who was able to dispose of him in various other ways, he, after about two years' stay, left the college, and went home. But the case of Johnson was far different; his fortunes were at sea; his title to a stipend was gone, and all that he could obtain from the father of Mr. Corbett was an agreement, during his continuance at college, to pay for his commons[1].] Hawk. p. 9, 10.

[1] Mr. Murphy, in his Life of Johnson, follows Hawkins; but the date of [Mr. Corbett's entry into and retirement from college does not tally with either Boswell's or Hawkins's account. Andrew Corbett appears, from the books of Pembroke College (as Dr. Hall informs me), to have been admitted 24th February, 1727, and his name was removed from the books February 21, 1732: so that, as Johnson entered in Oct. 1728, and does not appear to have returned after Christmas, 1729, Corbett was of the University twenty months *before*, and twelve or thirteen months *after* Johnson. And, on re-

He, however, went to Oxford, and was entered a commoner of Pembroke College, on the 31st of October, 1728, being then in his nineteenth year.

The Reverend Dr. Adams, who afterwards presided over Pembroke College with universal esteem, told me he was present, and gave me some account of what passed on the night of Johnson's arrival at Oxford. On that evening, his father, who had anxiously accompanied him, found means to have him introduced to Mr. Jorden, who was to be his tutor. His being put under any tutor, reminds us of what Wood says of Robert Burton, author of the "Anatomy of Melancholy," when elected student of Christ-church; "for form's sake, *though he wanted not a tutor*, he was put under the tuition of Dr. John Bancroft, afterwards Bishop of Oxon[1]."

His father seemed very full of the merits of his son, and told the company he was a good scholar, and a poet, and wrote Latin verses. His figure and manner appeared strange to them; but he behaved modestly, and sat silent, till upon something which occurred in the course of conversation, he suddenly struck in and quoted Macrobius; and thus he gave the first impression of that more extensive reading in which he had indulged himself.

His tutor[2], Mr. Jorden, fellow of Pembroke, was

ference to the college books, it appears that Corbett's residence was so irregular, and so little coincident with Johnson's, that there is no reason to suppose that Johnson was employed either as the *private tutor* of Corbett, as Hawkins states, or his *companion*, as Boswell suggests.—ED.]

[1] Athen. Oxon. edit. 1721, i. 627.—BOSWELL.

[2] [There are, as Dr. Hall observes to me, many small errors in Mr. Boswell's account of Johnson's college life, and particularly as to the relation between him and Mr. Jorden. It is not the custom at Pembroke to assign particular tutors to individual students. There are two college tutors appointed for the whole. Mr. Jorden was therefore no more the tutor of Johnson than of any other student, and Johnson was equally the pupil of the other college tutor; though, as the latter was probably the tutor in mathematics, it seems likely that Johnson did not pay him much attention. Mr. Boswell either did not consult Dr. Adams, or did not remember accurately what the Doctor must have told him on these points.—ED.]

not, it seems, a man of such abilities as we should conceive requisite for the instructor of Samuel Johnson, who [would oftener risk the payment of a small fine than attend his lectures; nor was he studious to conceal the reason of his absence. Upon occasion of one such imposition, he said to Jorden, "Sir, you have sconced me two-pence for non-attendance at a lecture not worth a penny[1]."] He gave me the following account of him: "He was a very worthy man, but a heavy man, and I did not profit much by his instructions. Indeed, I did not attend him much. The first day after I came to college, I waited upon him, and then staid away four. On the sixth, Mr. Jorden asked me why I had not attended. I answered I had been sliding in Christ-church meadow. And this I said with as much *nonchalance* as I am now talking to you. I had no notion that I was wrong or irreverent to my tutor." BOSWELL. "That, sir, was great fortitude of mind." JOHNSON. "No, sir; stark insensibility[2]."

Hawk. p. 9.

Oxford, 20 Mar. 1776.

[When he told this anecdote to Mrs. Piozzi, he laughed very heartily at the recollection of his own insolence, and said they endured it from him with wonderful acquiescence, and a gentleness that, whenever he thought of it, astonished himself. He said, too, that when he made his first declamation, he wrote over but one copy, and that coarsely; and having given it into the hand of the tutor who stood to receive it as he passed, was obliged to begin by chance and continue on how he could, for he had got but little of it by heart; so, fairly trusting to his present powers for immediate supply, he finished by adding

Piozzi, p. 23.

[1] [It has been thought worth while to preserve this anecdote, as an early specimen of the *antithetical* style of Johnson's conversation.—ED.]

[2] It ought to be remembered, that Dr. Johnson was apt, in his literary as well as moral exercises, to overcharge his defects. Dr. Adams informed me, that he attended his tutor's lectures, and also the lectures in the College Hall, very regularly.—BOSWELL.

Piozzi, p. 23. astonishment to the applause of all who knew how little was owing to study. A prodigious risk, however, said some one: "Not at all (exclaims Johnson): no man, I suppose, leaps at once into deep water who does not know how to swim."]

The fifth of November was at that time kept with great solemnity at Pembroke College, and exercises upon the subject of the day were required. Johnson neglected to perform his, which is much to be regretted; for his vivacity of imagination, and force of language, would probably have produced something sublime upon the Gunpowder Plot. To apologise for his neglect, he gave in a short copy of verses, entitled *Somnium*, containing a common thought: "that the Muse had come to him in his sleep, and whispered, that it did not become him to write on such subjects as politicks; he should confine himself to humbler themes:" but the versification was truly Virgilian.

He had a love and respect for Jorden, not for his literature, but for his worth. "Whenever (said he) a young man becomes Jorden's pupil, he becomes his son."

Having given such a specimen of his poetical powers, he was asked by Mr. Jorden, to translate Pope's Messiah into Latin verse, as a Christmas exercise[1]. He performed it with uncommon rapidity, and in so masterly a manner, that he obtained great applause from it, which ever after kept him high in the estimation of his college, and, indeed, of all the university.

Hawk. p. 13. It is said, that Mr. Pope expressed himself concerning it in terms of strong approbation. [The poem having been shown to him by a son of Dr. Arbuthnot, then a gentleman commoner of Christ-

[1] [If Dr. Hall's inferences from the dates in the college books be correct, this must have been the Christmas immediately following his entry into college. —Ed.]

church, was read, and returned with this encomium: "The writer of this poem will leave it a question for posterity, whether his or mine be the original."] Dr. Taylor told me, that it was first printed for old Mr. Johnson, without the knowledge of his son, who was very angry when he heard of it. A Miscellany of Poems collected by a person of the name of Husbands[1], was published at Oxford in 1731. In that Miscellany, Johnson's Translation of the Messiah appeared, with this modest motto from Scaliger's Poeticks, "*Ex alieno ingenio Poeta, ex suo tantum versificator.*"

I am not ignorant that critical objections have been made to this and other specimens of Johnson's Latin poetry. I acknowledge myself not competent to decide on a question of such extreme nicety. But I am satisfied with the just and discriminative eulogy pronounced upon it by my friend Mr. Courtenay, [in his Poetical Review of the Literary and Moral Character of Dr. Johnson.]

"And with like ease his vivid lines assume
The garb and dignity of ancient Rome.—
Let college *verse-men* trite conceits express,
Trick'd out in splendid shreds of Virgil's dress:
From playful Ovid cull the tinsel phrase,
And vapid notions hitch in pilfer'd lays;
Then with mosaic art the piece combine,
And boast the glitter of each dulcet line:
Johnson adventur'd boldly to transfuse
His vigorous sense into the Latin muse;
Aspir'd to shine by unreflected light,
And with a Roman's ardour *think* and write.
He felt the tuneful Nine his breast inspire,
And, like a master, wak'd the soothing lyre:
Horatian strains a grateful heart proclaim,
While Sky's wild rocks resound his Thralia's name[2] —

[1] [John Husbands, the editor of this Miscellany, was a cotemporary of Johnson at Pembroke College, having been admitted a fellow and A. M. in 1728. —Hall.]

[2] [This refers to a Latin ode addressed to Mrs. Thrale from the Isle of Skie, which will be mentioned in its proper place, under 6th September, 1773.—Ed.]

Hesperia's plant, in some less skilful hands,
To bloom a while, factitious heat demands:
Though glowing Maro a faint warmth supplies,
The sickly blossom in the hot-house dies:
By Johnson's genial culture, art, and toil,
Its root strikes deep, and owns the fost'ring soil;
Imbibes our sun through all its swelling veins,
And grows a native of Britannia's plains."

The "morbid melancholy," which was lurking in his constitution, and to which we may ascribe those particularities, and that aversion to regular life, which, at a very early period, marked his character, gathered such strength in his twentieth year, as to afflict him in a dreadful manner. While he was at Lichfield, in the college vacation of the year 1729[1], he felt himself overwhelmed with a horrible hypochondria, with perpetual irritation, fretfulness, and impatience; and with a dejection, gloom, and despair, which made existence misery. From this dismal malady he never afterwards was perfectly relieved; and all his labours, and all his enjoyments, were but temporary interruptions of its baleful influence. How wonderful, how unsearchable are the ways of GOD! Johnson, who was blest with all the powers of genius and understanding in a degree far above the ordinary state of human nature, was at the same time visited with a disorder so afflictive, that they who know it by dire experience, will not envy his exalted endowments. That it was, in some degree, occasioned by a defect in his nervous system, that inexplicable part of our frame, appears highly probable. He told Mr. Paradise[2] that he was sometimes so languid and in-

[1] [It seems, as Dr. Hall suggests, probable, that this is a mistake for 1730: Johnson appears to have remained in college during the vacation of 1729, and we have no trace of him in the year 1730, during which he was, possibly, labouring under this malady, and, on that account, absent from college.—ED.]

[2] [John Paradise, Esq. D. C. L. of Oxford, and F. R. S., was of Greek extraction, the son of the English Consul at Salonica, where he was born: he was educated at Padua, but resided the greater part of his life in London; in the literary circles of which he was generally known and highly esteemed. He seems to have been a good classical scholar, and certainly spoke most

efficient, that he could not distinguish the hour upon the town-clock.

Johnson, upon the first violent attack of this disorder, strove to overcome it by forcible exertions[1]. He frequently walked to Birmingham and back again, and tried many other expedients, but all in vain. His expression concerning it to me was, "I did not then know how to manage it." His distress became so intolerable, that he applied to Dr. Swinfen, physician in Lichfield, his godfather[2], and put into his hands a state of his case, written in Latin. Dr. Swinfen was so much struck with the extraordinary acuteness, research, and eloquence of this paper, that in his zeal for his godson he showed it to several people. His daughter, Mrs. Desmoulins, who was many years humanely supported in Dr. Johnson's house in London, told me, that upon his discovering that Dr. Swinfen had communicated his case, he was so much offended, that he was never afterwards fully reconciled to him. He indeed had good reason to be offended; for though Dr. Swinfen's motive was good, he inconsiderately betrayed a matter deeply interesting and of great delicacy, which had been intrusted to him in confidence; and exposed a complaint of his young friend and patient, which, in the superficial opinion of the generality of mankind, is attended with contempt and disgrace.

European languages (amongst the rest, modern Greek and Turkish) with great facility. This unusual accomplishment was probably the cause of his intimacy with Sir William Jones, to whom we learn (*Teignmouth's Life of Jones*, p. 221.) that he addressed a distich in ancient Greek, which had the singular honour of being copied by the hand of the celebrated Duchess of Devonshire. Mr. Paradise became intimate with Johnson in the latter portion of the Doctor's life; was a member of his Essex-street club; and attended his funeral. Mr. Paradise died, at his house in Titchfield-street, 12 Dec. 1795. —Ed.]

[1] [It appears, from his own account of his father (*ante*, p. 4), that he thought exercise and change of place alleviated this disease, which he inherited from him. It seems that he did not, in his own mind, connect this disease with the scrofula, which he derived, as he thought, from his mother, or, as Dr. Swinfen believed, from his nurse.—Ed.]

[2] [See *ante*, p. 15.—Ed.]

But let not little men triumph upon knowing that Johnson was an HYPOCHONDRIACK, was subject to what the learned, philosophical, and pious Dr. Cheyne has so well treated under the title of "The English Malady." Though he suffered severely from it, he was not therefore degraded. The powers of his great mind might be troubled, and their full exercise suspended at times; but the mind itself was ever entire. As a proof of this, it is only necessary to consider, that when he was at the very worst, he composed that state of his own case, which showed an uncommon vigour, not only of fancy and taste, but of judgement. I am aware that he himself was too ready to call such a complaint by the name of *madness;* in conformity with which notion, he has traced its gradations, with exquisite nicety, in one of the chapters[1] of his RASSELAS. But there is surely a clear distinction between a disorder which affects only the imagination and spirits, while the judgement is sound, and a disorder by which the judgement itself is impaired. This distinction was made to me by the late Professor Gaubius of Leyden, physician to the Prince of Orange, in a conversation which I had with him several years ago, and he expanded it thus: "If (said he) a man tell me that he is grievously disturbed, for that he *imagines* he sees a ruffian coming against him with a drawn sword, though at the same time he is *conscious* it is a delusion, I pronounce him to have a disordered imagination; but if a man tells me that he *sees* this, and in consternation calls to me to look at it, I pronounce him to be *mad.*"

It is a common effect of low spirits or melancholy, to make those who are afflicted with it imagine that they are actually suffering those evils which happen to be most strongly presented to their minds. Some

[1] [Ch. 53. on the Dangerous Prevalence of Imagination.—ED.]

have fancied themselves to be deprived of the use of their limbs, some to labour under acute diseases, others to be in extreme poverty; when, in truth, there was not the least reality in any of the suppositions; so that when the vapours were dispelled, they were convinced of the delusion. To Johnson, whose supreme enjoyment was the exercise of his reason, the disturbance or obscuration of that faculty was the evil most to be dreaded. Insanity, therefore, was the object of his most dismal apprehension; and he fancied himself seized by it, or approaching to it, at the very time when he was giving proofs of a more than ordinary soundness and vigour of judgement. That his own diseased imagination should have so far deceived him is strange; but it is stranger still that some of his friends should have given credit to his groundless opinion, when they had such undoubted proofs that it was totally fallacious; though it is by no means surprising that those who wish to depreciate him should, since his death, have laid hold of this circumstance, and insisted upon it with very unfair aggravation[1].

Amidst the oppression and distraction of a disease which very few have felt in its full extent, but many[2] have experienced in a lighter degree, Johnson, in his writings, and in his conversation, never failed to display all the varieties of intellectual excellence. In his march through this world to a better, his mind

[1] [This, it is to be presumed, was Boswell's reason for concealing that passage of Mr. Hector's paper which is restored in p. 24; but Johnson himself was not so scrupulous. He says, in a letter to Dr. Warton (which will be found under 24 Dec. 1754), "Poor dear Collins! I have been often *near his state*, and therefore have it in great commiseration." It is wonderful, that Boswell does not see the inconsistency of blaming others for repeating what Johnson himself frequently avowed, and what Boswell himself *first* told the world. See *ante*, p. 3.—Ed.]

[2] [Mr. Boswell himself, as will be seen by his own complaints, and as was well known to his friends, was himself occasionally afflicted with this morbid depression of spirits, and was, at intervals, equally liable to paroxysms of what may be called *morbid vivacity*. He wrote, as Mr. D'Israeli observes, a Series of Essays in the London Magazine, under the title of the "Hypochondriac," commencing in 1777, and carried on till 1782.—Ed.]

still appeared grand and brilliant, and impressed all around him with the truth of Virgil's noble sentiment—

"*Igneus est ollis vigor et cœlestis origo.*"

The history of his mind as to religion is an important article. I have mentioned the early impressions made upon his tender imagination by his mother, who continued her pious cares with assiduity, but, in his opinion, not with judgement. "Sunday (said he) was a heavy day to me when I was a boy. My mother confined me on that day, and made me read 'The Whole Duty of Man,' from a great part of which I could derive no instruction. When, for instance, I had read the chapter on theft, which from my infancy I had been taught was wrong, I was no more convinced that theft was wrong than before; so there was no accession of knowledge. A boy should be introduced to such books, by having his attention directed to the arrangement, to the style, and other excellencies of composition; that the mind being thus engaged by an amusing variety of objects may not grow weary."

He communicated to me the following particulars upon the subject of his religious progress. "I fell into an inattention to religion, or an indifference about it, in my ninth year. The church at Lichfield, in which we had a seat, wanted reparation, so I was to go and find a seat in other churches; and having bad eyes, and being awkward about this, I used to go and read in the fields on Sunday. This habit continued till my fourteenth year; and still I find a great reluctance to go to church. I then became a sort of lax *talker* against religion, for I did not much *think* against it; and this lasted till I went to Oxford, where it would not be *suffered*. When at Oxford, I took up 'Law's Serious Call to a Holy

Life,' expecting to find it a dull book (as such books generally are), and perhaps to laugh at it. But I found Law quite an overmatch for me; and this was the first occasion of my thinking in earnest of religion, after I became capable of rational inquiry[1]." From this time forward religion was the predominant object of his thoughts; though, with the just sentiments of a conscientious Christian, he lamented that his practice of its duties fell far short of what it ought to be.

This instance of a mind such as that of Johnson being first disposed, by an unexpected incident, to think with anxiety of the momentous concerns of eternity, and of "what he should do to be saved," may for ever be produced in opposition to the superficial and sometimes profane contempt that has been thrown upon those occasional impressions which it is certain many Christians have experienced; though it must be acknowledged that weak minds, from an erroneous supposition, that no man is in a state of grace who has not felt a particular conversion, have, in some cases, brought a degree of ridicule upon them; a ridicule, of which it is inconsiderate or unfair to make a general application.

How seriously Johnson was impressed with a sense of religion, even in the vigour of his youth, appears from the following passage in his minutes kept by way of diary:

"Sept. 7, 1736[2]. I have this day entered upon my 28th year.

[1] [Mr. Boswell here adds a note, complaining that Mrs. Piozzi had, in her Anecdotes, misrepresented this matter: the misrepresentation, after all, is not great, and the editor therefore omits a long controversial note.—Ed.]

[2] [This Boswell has borrowed, without acknowledgement, from Sir J. Hawkins (p. 163). But it is to be observed, that after a prayer on his birthday in 1738, Johnson (on transcribing it in 1768) adds, "This is the first solemn prayer of which I have a copy; whether I composed any before this, I question." Pr. and Med. p. 3. He had either forgotten the prayer of 1736, or considered it only an occasional ejaculation, and not a *solemn* prayer. But serious and pious meditations and resolutions had been early familiar to his mind. He writes, in 1764, that "from *almost the earliest time that he could remember*, he had been forming schemes for a *better life*." Pr. and Med. p. 57. —Ed.]

Mayest thou, O God, enable me, for JESUS CHRIST'S sake, to spend this in such a manner, that I may receive comfort from it at the hour of death, and in the day of judgement! Amen."

The particular course of his reading while at Oxford, and during the time of vacation which he passed at home, cannot be traced. [He had but little relish for mathematical learning, and was content with such a degree of knowledge in physicks, as he could not but acquire in the ordinary exercises of the place: his fortunes and circumstances had determined him to no particular course of study, and were such as seemed to exclude him from every one of the learned professions.] Enough has been said of his irregular mode of study. He told me, that from his earliest years he loved to read poetry, but hardly ever read any poem to an end; that he read Shakspeare at a period so early, that the speech of the Ghost in Hamlet terrified him when he was alone; that Horace's Odes were the compositions in which he took most delight[1], and it was long before he liked his Epistles and Satires. He told me what he read *solidly* at Oxford was Greek; not the Grecian historians, but Homer and Euripides, and now and then a little Epigram; that the study of which he was the most fond was Metaphysicks, but he had not read much, even in that way. I always thought that he did himself injustice in his account of what he had read, and that he must have been speaking with reference to the vast portion of study which is possible, and to which a few scholars in the whole history of literature have atcained; for when I once asked him whether a person, whose name I have now forgotten,

Hawk. p. 14.

[1] [Though some of his odes are easy, and in what he no doubt thought the Horatian style, we shall see that to Miss Carter he confessed a fondness for Martial, and his epigrams certainly were influenced by that partiality. Dr. Hall has a small volume of Hendecasyllabic poetry, entitled "Poetæ Rusticantis Literatum Otium sive Carmina Andreæ Francisci Landesii. Lond. 1713;" which belonged to Johnson, and some peculiarities of the style of these verses may be traced in his college compositions.—ED.]

studied hard, he answered, "No, sir. I do not believe he studied hard. I never knew a man who studied hard. I conclude, indeed, from the effects, that some men have studied hard, as Bentley and Clarke." Trying him by that criterion upon which he formed his judgement of others, we may be absolutely certain, both from his writings and his conversation, that his reading was very extensive. Dr. Adam Smith[1], than whom few were better judges on this subject, once observed to me, that "Johnson knew more books than any man alive." He had a peculiar facility in seizing at once what was valuable in any book, without submitting to the labour of perusing it from beginning to end. He had, from the irritability of his constitution, at all times, an impatience and hurry when he either read or wrote. A certain apprehension arising from novelty, made him write his first exercise at college twice over; but he never took that trouble with any other composition: and we shall see that his most excellent works were struck off at a heat, with rapid exertion[2].

Yet he appears, from his early notes or memorandums in my possession, to have at various times attempted, or at least planned, a methodical course of study, according to computation, of which he was all his life fond, as it fixed his attention steadily upon something without, and prevented his mind from preying upon itself. Thus I find in his hand-writing the number of lines in each of two of Euripides's

[1] [Boswell might have selected, if not a better judge, at least better authority, for Adam Smith had comparatively little intercourse with Johnson, and the sentence pronounced is one which could only be justified by an intimate literary acquaintance. But Boswell's *nationality* (though he fancied he had quite subdued it) inclined him to quote the eminent *Scottish* professor. We shall see many instances of a similar (not illaudable) disposition.—ED.]

[2] He told Dr. Burney, that he never wrote any of his works that were printed twice over. Dr. Burney's wonder at seeing several pages of his "Lives of the Poets" in manuscript, with scarce a blot or erasure, drew this observation from him.—MALONE.

Tragedies, of the Georgicks of Virgil, of the first six books of the Æneid, of Horace's Art of Poetry, of three of the books of Ovid's Metamorphoses, of some parts of Theocritus, and of the tenth Satire of Juvenal; and a table, showing at the rate of various numbers a day (I suppose, verses to be read), what would be, in each case, the total amount in a week, month, and year. [In his Prayers and Meditations there are frequent computations of this kind applied to the Scriptures.

Prayers & Med. p. 57. "I resolve to study the Scriptures; I hope in the original languages. Six hundred and forty verses every Sunday will nearly comprise the Scriptures in a year.

P. 99. "The plan which I formed for reading the Scriptures was to read six hundred verses in the Old Testament, and two hundred in the New, every week."]

No man had a more ardent love of literature, or a higher respect for it, than Johnson. His apartment in Pembroke College was that upon the second floor over the gateway. The enthusiast of learning will ever contemplate it with veneration. One day, while he was sitting in it quite alone, Dr. Panting[1], then master of the College, whom he called "a fine Jacobite fellow," overheard him uttering this soliloquy in his strong emphatic voice: "Well, I have a mind to see what is done in other places of learning. I'll go and visit the Universities abroad. I'll go to France and Italy. I'll go to Padua. And I'll mind my business. For an *Athenian* blockhead is the worst of all blockheads[2]."

[1] [Dr. Mathew Panting, Master of Pembroke, is stated, in the *Historical Register*, to have died 26th Nov. 1729; but Dr. Hall informs me that his death was *certainly* in Feb. 1738.—Ed.]

[2] I had this anecdote from Dr. Adams, and Dr. Johnson confirmed it. Bramston, in his "Man of Taste," has the same thought:

"Sure, of all blockheads, scholars are the worst."—Boswell.

Johnson's meaning, however, is, that a scholar who is a blockhead, must be the worst of all blockheads, because he is without excuse. But Bramston, in the assumed character of an ignorant coxcomb, maintains, that *all* scholars are blockheads, on account of their scholarship.—J. Boswell.

Dr. Adams told me that Johnson, while he was at Pembroke College, "was caressed and loved by all about him, was a gay and frolicksome fellow, and passed there the happiest part of his life." But this is a striking proof of the fallacy of appearances, and how little any of us know of the real internal state even of those whom we see most frequently; for the truth is, that he was then depressed by poverty, and irritated by disease. When I mentioned to him this account as given me by Dr. Adams, he said, "Ah, sir, I was mad and violent. It was bitterness which they mistook for frolick. I was miserably poor, and I thought to fight my way by my literature and my wit; so I disregarded all power and all authority."

The Bishop of Dromore [Percy] observes in a letter to me, "The pleasure he took in vexing the tutors and fellows has been often mentioned. But I have heard him say, what ought to be recorded to the honour of the present venerable master of that college, the Reverend William Adams, D. D. who was then very young[1], and one of the junior fellows; that the mild but judicious expostulations of this worthy man, whose virtue awed him, and whose learning he revered, made him really ashamed of himself, 'though I fear (said he) I was too proud to own it.'

"I have heard from some of his contemporaries that he was generally seen lounging at the college gate, with a circle of young students round him, whom he was entertaining with wit, and keeping from their studies, if not spiriting them up to rebellion against the college discipline, which in his maturer years he so much extolled."

[1] [Dr. Adams was about two years older than Johnson, having been born in 1707. He became a Fellow of Pembroke in 1723, D.D. in 1756, and Master of the College in 1775.—HALL.]

ED. [There are preserved in Pembroke College some of these themes, or exercises, both in prose and verse: the following, though the two first lines are awkward, has more point and pleasantry than his epigrams usually have. It may be surmised that the college beer was at this time indifferent.

Pemb. MSS.

"*Mca nec Falernæ*
Temperant vites, neque Formiani
Pocula colles."

"Quid mirum Maro quod dignè canit arma virumque,
Quid quod putidulùm nostra Camæna sonat?
Limosum nobis Promus dat callidus haustum,
Virgilio vires uva Falerna dedit.
Carmina vis nostri scribant meliora Poetæ?
Ingenium jubeas purior haustus alat!"

Another, is in a graver and better style.

"*Adjecere bonæ paulo plus artis Athenæ.*"

"Quas natura dedit dotes, Academia promit;
Dat menti propriis Musa nitere bonis.
Materiam statuæ sic præbet marmora tellus,
Saxea Phidiacâ spirat imago manu [1].]"

He very early began to attempt keeping notes or memorandums, by way of a diary of his life. I find, in a parcel of loose leaves, the following spirited resolution, to contend against his natural indolence:

"*Oct.* 1729. *Desidiæ valedixi; syrenis istius cantibus surdam posthac aurem obversurus.*—I bid farewell to Sloth, being resolved henceforth not to listen to her siren strains."

I have also in my possession a few leaves of another *Libellus*, or little book, entitled ANNALES, in which some of the early particulars of his history are registered in Latin.

I do not find that he formed any close intimacies

[1] [Johnson repeated this idea in the Latin verses on the termination of his Dictionary, entitled ΓΝΩΘΙ ΣΕΑΤΤΟΝ, but not, as the editor thinks, so elegantly as in the epigram. These themes, with much other information (which is distinguished by the addition of his name), have been supplied by the Rev. George William Hall, D. D. now Master of Pembroke College, who has felt a generous anxiety to contribute as much as was in his power to the history of him whom Pembroke must reckon as one of her most illustrious sons.—ED.]

with his fellow-collegians. But Dr. Adams told me that he contracted a love and regard for Pembroke College, which he retained to the last. A short time before his death he sent to that college a present of all[1] his works, to be deposited in their library; and he had thoughts of leaving to it his house at Lichfield; but his friends who were about him very properly dissuaded him from it, and he bequeathed it to some poor relations. He took a pleasure in boasting of the many eminent men who had been educated at Pembroke. In this list are found the names of Mr. Hawkins the Poetry Professor, Mr. Shenstone, Sir William Blackstone, and others[2]; not forgetting the celebrated popular preacher, Mr. George Whitefield, of whom, though Dr. Johnson did not think very highly, it must be acknowledged that his eloquence was powerful, his views pious and charitable, his assiduity almost incredible; and that, since his death, the integrity of his character has been fully vindicated. Being himself a poet, Johnson was peculiarly happy in mentioning how many of the sons of Pembroke were poets; adding, with a smile of sportive triumph, "Sir, we are a nest of singing birds."

He was not, however, blind to what he thought the defects of his own college: and I have, from the information of Dr. Taylor, a very strong instance of that rigid honesty which he ever inflexibly preserved. Taylor had obtained his father's consent to be entered of Pembroke, that he might be with his schoolfellow Johnson, with whom, though some years older than himself, he was very intimate. This would have been a great comfort to Johnson. But he fairly told

[1] [Certainly not *all*, and those which we have are not *all* marked as presented by him.—HALL.]

[2] See Nash's History of Worcestershire, vol. i. p. 529.

Taylor that he could not, in conscience, suffer him to enter where he knew he could not have an able tutor. He then made inquiry all round the University, and having found that Mr. Bateman of Christ-church was the tutor of highest reputation, Taylor was entered of that college[1]. Mr. Bateman's lectures were so excellent, that Johnson used to come and get them at second-hand from Taylor, till his poverty being so extreme, that his shoes were worn out, and his feet appeared through them, he saw that this humiliating circumstance was perceived by the Christ-church men, and he came no more. He was too proud to accept of money, and somebody having set a pair of new shoes at his door, he threw them away with indignation. How must we feel when we read such an anecdote of Samuel Johnson!

His spirited refusal of an eleemosynary supply of shoes arose, no doubt, from a proper pride. But, considering his ascetic disposition at times, as acknowledged by himself in his Meditations, and the exaggeration with which some have treated the peculiarities of his character, I should not wonder to hear it ascribed to a principle of superstitious mortification; as we are told by Tursellinus, in his Life of St. Ignatius Loyola, that this intrepid founder of the order of Jesuits, when he arrived at Goa, after having made a severe pilgrimage through the eastern deserts, persisted in wearing his miserable shattered shoes, and when new ones were offered him, rejected them as an unsuitable indulgence.

The *res angusta domi*[2] prevented him from having

[1] [Authoritatively and circumstantially as this story is told, there is good reason for disbelieving it altogether. Taylor was admitted commoner of Christ-church, June 27, 1730; but it will be seen, in the notes in the next page, that Johnson left Oxford six months before.—ED.]

[2] [Notwithstanding what has been said on this subject, as far as we can judge from a cursory view of the weekly account in the buttery books, Johnson ap-

the advantage of a complete academical education. The friend to whom he had trusted for support had deceived him. His debts in college, though not great, were increasing; and his scanty remittances from Lichfield, which had all along been made with great difficulty, could be supplied no longer, his father having fallen into a state of insolvency. Compelled, therefore, by irresistible necessity, he left the college in autumn, 1731, without a degree, having been a member of it little more than three years[1].

Dr. Adams, the worthy and respectable master of Pembroke College, has generally had the reputation of being Johnson's tutor. The fact, however, is, that, in 1731, Mr. Jorden quitted the college, and his pupils were transferred to Dr. Adams; so that had Johnson returned, Dr. Adams *would have been his tutor*. It is to be wished that this connexion had taken place. His equal temper, mild disposition, and politeness of manners, might have insensibly softened the harshness of Johnson, and infused into him those more delicate charities, those *petites morales*, in which, it must be confessed, our great

pears to have lived as well as the other commoners and scholars, and he left no college debts.—HALL.]

[1] [He was not quite three years a member of the college, having been entered Oct. 31, 1728, and his name having been finally removed Oct. 8, 1731. It would appear by temporary suspensions of his name, and replacements of it, as if he had contemplated an earlier departure from college, and had been induced to continue on with the hope of returning: this, however, he never did after his absence, Dec. 1729, having kept a continuous residence of sixty weeks.—HALL.]

[It will be observed, that Mr. Boswell slurs over the years 1729, 1730, and 1731, under the general inference that they were all spent at Oxford; but Dr. Hall's accurate statement of dates from the college books, proves that Johnson *personally* left college 12th Dec. 1729, though his *name* remained on the books near two years longer, viz. till 8th Oct. 1731. Here then are two important years, the 21st and 22d of his age, to be accounted for; and Mr. Boswell's assertion (a little farther on), that he could not have been assistant to Anthony Blackwell, *because* Blackwell died in 1730, before Johnson had left college, falls to the ground. That these two years were not pleasantly or profitably spent, may be inferred from the silence of Johnson and all his friends about them. It is due to Pembroke to note particularly this absence, because that institution possesses (on the foundation of Sir J. Bennett, Lord Ossulston), two scholarships, to one of which Johnson would have been eligible, and probably (considering his claims) elected in 1730, had he been a candidate.—ED.]

moralist was more deficient than his best friends could fully justify. Dr. Adams paid Johnson this high compliment. He said to me at Oxford, in 1776, "I was his nominal tutor; but he was above my mark." When I repeated it to Johnson, his eyes flashed with grateful satisfaction, and he exclaimed, "That was liberal and noble[1]."

And now (I had almost said *poor*) Samuel Johnson returned to his native city, destitute, and not knowing how he should gain even a decent livelihood. His father's misfortunes in trade rendered him unable to support his son: [he had become insolvent, if not, as Dr. Johnson told Sir J. Hawkins, an actual bankrupt]; and for some time there appeared no means by which he could maintain himself. In the December of this year his father died[2].

Hawk. p. 17.

The state of poverty in which he died, appears from a note in one of Johnson's little diaries of the following year, which strongly displays his spirit and virtuous dignity of mind.

"1732, *Julii* 15. *Undecim aurcos deposui, quo die quicquid ante matris funus (quod serum sit precor) de paternis bonis sperari licet, viginti scilicet libras accepi. Usque adeo mihi fortuna fingenda*

[1] [This seems hardly consistent with the preceding facts. If Adams called himself his *nominal* tutor, *only* because the pupil was above his mark, the expression would be *liberal* and *noble;* but if he was his nominal tutor, only because he *would have been* his tutor if Johnson had returned, the case is different, and Boswell is, either way, guilty of an inaccuracy, which (however trifling) he would not have forgiven in Hawkins or Mrs. Piozzi. Nor does there seem any reason for the regret (disparaging towards Mr. Jorden) which Boswell expresses, that "this connexion between Johnson and Dr. Adams had not taken place;" for Johnson, as we have seen (*ante*, p. 32), gave Jorden the highest moral praise, by saying, that "when a young man became his *pupil*, he became his *son*." Of the regard which his pupils felt for Mr. Jorden, Dr. Hall has pointed out a remarkable instance in the *Monthly Chronicle* for November, 1729. "About this time, the Rev. Mr. Jorden, B.D., Fellow of Pembroke College, in Oxford, was presented by Mr. Vyse, a young gentleman, his pupil, to the rectory of Standon, in Staffordshire, vacant by the death of the Rev. Mr. Jarvis."—Ed.]

[2] [Among the MSS. of Pembroke College are a few little bills for books had by Mr. Walmesley of Michael Johnson, with letters from the widow, the son Nathanael, and others about payment, which declare the state of poverty she was left in.—Hall.]

est. Interea, ne paupertate vires animi languescant, nec in flagitia egestas abigat, cavendum. I layed by eleven guineas on this day, when I received twenty pounds, being all that I have reason to hope for out of my father's effects, previous to the death of my mother; an event which, I pray GOD, may be very remote. I now, therefore, see that I must make my own fortune. Meanwhile, let me take care that the powers of my mind be not debilitated by poverty, and that indigence do not force me into any criminal act."

Johnson was so far fortunate, that the respectable character of his parents, and his own merit, had, from his earliest years, secured him a kind reception in the best families at Lichfield. Among these I can mention Mr. Howard, Dr. Swinfen, Mr. Simpson, Mr. Levett, Captain Garrick, father of the great ornament of the British stage; but above all, Mr. Gilbert Walmsley [1], Registrar of the Ecclesiastical Court of Lichfield, whose character, long after his decease, Dr. Johnson has, in his life of Edmund Smith, thus drawn in the glowing colours of gratitude:

"Of Gilbert Walmsley, thus presented to my mind, let me indulge myself in the remembrance. I knew him very early; he was one of the first friends that literature procured me, and I hope that, at least, my gratitude made me worthy of his notice.

"He was of an advanced age, and I was only not a boy, yet he never received my notions with contempt. He was a whig, with all the virulence and malevolence of his party; yet difference of opinion did not keep us apart. I honoured him, and he endured me.

"He had mingled with the gay world without exemption from its vices or its follies; but had never neglected the cultivation

[1] Mr. Warton informs me, "that this early friend of Johnson was entered a commoner of Trinity College, Oxford, aged 17, in 1698; and is the author of many Latin verse translations in the *Gentleman's Magazine*. One of them is a translation (*Gent. Mag.* vol. 15, p. 102) of "My time, O ye Muses, was happily spent," &c. He [was born in 1680, and] died August 3, 1751. A monument to his memory has been erected in the cathedral of Lichfield, with an inscription written by Mr. Seward, one of the prebendaries.—BOSWELL. [He was the son of W. Walmesley, LL.D. chancellor of the diocese of Lichfield from 1698 to 1713, who was elected M.P. for that city in 1701, and brother of Dr. Walmesley, Dean of Lichfield, who died in Sept. 1730. Johnson, and Boswell after him, spell this name Walmsley, but the true spelling is that which has been adopted in this note.—ED.]

of his mind. His belief of revelation was unshaken; his learning preserved his principles; he grew first regular, and then pious.

"His studies had been so various, that I am not able to name a man of equal knowledge. His acquaintance with books was great, and what he did not immediately know, he could, at least, tell where to find. Such was his amplitude of learning, and such his copiousness of communication, that it may be doubted whether a day now passes, in which I have not some advantage from his friendship.

"At this man's table[1] I enjoyed many cheerful and instructive hours, with companions, such as are not often found—with one who has lengthened, and one who has gladdened life—with Dr. James, whose skill in physick will be long remembered; and with David Garrick, whom I hope to have gratified with this character of our common friend. But what are the hopes of man! I am disappointed by that stroke of death, which has eclipsed the gaiety of nations, and impoverished the publick stock of harmless pleasure."

In these families he passed much time in his early years. In most of them he was in the company of ladies, particularly at Mr. Walmsley's, whose wife and sisters-in-law, of the name of Aston, and daughters of a baronet, were remarkable for good breeding; so that the notion which has been industriously circulated and believed, that he never was in good company till late in life, and, consequently, had been confirmed in coarse and ferocious manners by long habits, is wholly without foundation. Some of the ladies have assured me, they recollected him well when a young man, as distinguished for his complaisance.

And that his politeness[2] was not merely occasional and temporary, or confined to the circles of Lichfield, is ascertained by the testimony of a lady[3], who, in a

[1] [This acknowledgement does not seem quite adequate to Johnson's obligations to Mr. Walmesley, who certainly gave him more active proofs of his benevolence than the mere admission to his table and society.—ED.]

[2] [There is, it will be observed, in all this, no testimony to Johnson's personal *politeness*, but only to his having been admitted to polite company.—ED.]

[3] [It were to be wished that Boswell had stated the name of this lady, as he has given us so much reason to distrust the information derived from "the circles of Lichfield."—ED.]

paper with which I have been favoured by a daughter of his intimate friend and physician, Dr. Lawrence, thus describes Dr. Johnson some years afterwards:

"As the particulars of the former part of Dr. Johnson's life do not seem to be very accurately known, a lady hopes that the following information may not be unacceptable.

"She remembers Dr. Johnson on a visit to Dr. Taylor [1], at Ashbourn, some time between the end of the year 37, and the middle of the year 40; she rather thinks it to have been after he and his wife were removed to London. During his stay at Ashbourn, he made frequent visits to Mr. Meynell, at Bradley, where his company was much desired by the ladies of the family, who were, perhaps, in point of elegance and accomplishments, inferiour to few of those with whom he was afterwards acquainted. Mr. Meynell's eldest daughter was afterwards married to Mr. Fitzherbert, father to Mr. Alleyne Fitzherbert, lately minister to the court of Russia [and since Lord St. Helens.] Of her, Dr. Johnson said, in Dr. Lawrence's study, that she had the best understanding he ever met with in any human being. At Mr. Meynell's he also commenced that friendship with Mrs. Hill Boothby, sister to the present Sir Brook Boothby, which continued till her death [2]. The *young woman whom he used to call* Hawk. p. 316.

[1] [Doctor Taylor must have been at this time a very young man. His residence at Ashbourn was patrimonial, and not ecclesiastical, as has been supposed. The house and grounds which Dr. Johnson's visits have rendered remarkable are now the property of Mr. Webster, Dr. Taylor's legatee.—ED.]

[2] [For the last few years of her life this lady corresponded with Dr. Johnson, and some of her letters are appended to the *Account of his early Life*, so often quoted. Indeed, they occupy 126 pages of the 144 of which that little publication consists. Miss Seward hints that there was an early attachment between Johnson and Miss Boothby. Miss Seward's anecdotes are so justly discredited, that it is hardly worth observing, that there appears no ground whatsoever for this story; and the unpublished letters, which are of a very serious and pious cast, not only negative Miss Seward's gossiping fancies, but throw some doubt on the accuracy of Mr. Boswell's informant, for they seem to prove that there had not been any intimate or even early acquaintance between the parties. Miss Boothby was born in 1708, and died in 1756.—ED.]

Molly Aston, was sister to Sir Thomas Aston, and daughter to a baronet; she was also sister to the wife of his friend, Mr. Gilbert Walmsley [1]. Besides his intimacy with the above-mentioned persons, who were surely people of rank and education, while he was yet at Lichfield he used to be frequently at the house of Dr. Swinfen, a gentleman of very ancient family in Staffordshire, from which, after the death of his elder brother, he inherited a good estate. He was, besides, a physician of very extensive practice; but for want of due attention to the management of his domestic concerns, left a very large family in indigence. One of his daughters, Mrs. Desmoulins, afterwards found an asylum in the house of her old friend, whose doors were always open to the unfortunate, and who well observed the precept of the Gospel, for he 'was kind to the unthankful and to the evil [2].'"

In the forlorn state of his circumstances, he accepted of an offer to be employed as usher in the school of Market-Bosworth, in Leicestershire, to which it appears, from one of his little fragments of a diary, that he went on foot, on the 16th of July.—"*Julii* 16. *Bosvortiam pedes petii.*" But it is not true, as has been erroneously related, that he was

Gent. Mag. liv. 957.

[1] Sir Thomas Aston, Bart., who died in January, 1724-5, left one son, named Thomas also, and eight daughters. Of the daughters, Catherine married Johnson's friend, the Hon. Henry Hervey; Margaret, Gilbert Walmsley. Another of these ladies [Jane] married the Rev. Mr. Gastrell [the clergyman who cut down Shakspeare's mulberry-tree]. Mary, or *Molly* Aston, as she was usually called, became the wife of Captain Brodie of the Navy. Another sister, who was unmarried, was living at Lichfield in 1776.—MALONE. [Of the latter, whose name was Elizabeth, Miss Seward has put an injurious character into the mouth of Dr. Johnson (in a dialogue which she reports herself to have had with him). She died in 1785, in the 78th year of her age.—ED.]

[2] [Here Mr. Boswell has admitted the insinuation of an anonymous informant against poor Mrs. Desmoulins, as bitter, surely, as any thing which can be charged against any of his rival biographers; and, strange to say, this scandal is conveyed in a quotation from the *book of Charity*. Mrs. Desmoulins was probably not popular with "the ladies of Lichfield." She is supposed to have forfeited the protection of her own family by, what they thought, a derogatory marriage. Her husband, it is said, was a writing-master.—ED.]

assistant to the famous Anthony Blackwall, whose merit has been honoured by the testimony of Bishop Hurd [1], who was his scholar; for Mr. Blackwall died on the 8th of April, 1730 [2], more than a year before Johnson left the University.

This employment was very irksome to him in every respect, and he complained grievously of it in his letters to his friend, Mr. Hector, who was now settled as a surgeon at Birmingham. The letters are lost; but Mr. Hector recollects his writing "that the poet had described the dull sameness of his existence in these words, '*Vitam continet una dies*' (one day contains the whole of my life); that it was unvaried as the note of the cuckow; and that he did not know whether it was more disagreeable for him to teach, or the boys to learn, the grammar rules." His general aversion to this painful drudgery was greatly enhanced by a disagreement between him and Sir Wolstan Dixie, the patron of the school, in whose house, I have been told, he officiated as a kind of domestic chaplain, so far, at least, as to say grace at table, but was treated with what he represented as intolerable harshness; and, after suffering for a few months such complicated misery [3], he relinquished a

[1] There is here (as Mr. James Boswell observes to me) a slight inaccuracy. Bishop Hurd, in the Epistle Dedicatory prefixed to his *Commentary on Horace's Art of Poetry*, &c., does not praise Blackwall, but the Rev. Mr. Budworth, head-master of the grammar-school at Brewood, in Staffordshire, who had himself been bred under Blackwall.—MALONE. [We shall see presently, on the authority of Mr. Nichols, that Johnson proposed himself to Mr. Budworth as an assistant.—ED.]

[2] [See *ante*, p. 47.—ED.]

[3] [Mr. Malone, in a note on this passage, states that he had read a letter of Johnson's to a friend, dated 27th July, 1732, saying that he had then recently left Sir Wolstan Dixie's house, and that he had some hopes of succeeding, either as master or usher, in the school of Ashbourn.

If Mr. Malone be correct in the date of this letter, and Mr. Boswell be also right in placing the extract from the diary under the year 1732, Johnson's sojourn at Bosworth could have been not more than *ten* days, a time too short to be characterized as "a period of complicated misery," and to be remembered during a long life "with the strongest aversion and horror." It must also be observed, that, according to the statements of Messrs. Boswell and Malone compared with the College books, Johnson's life, from December, 1729, to the beginning of 1733, is wholly unaccounted for, except the ten days supposed to have been so la-

situation which all his life afterwards he recollected with the strongest aversion, and even a degree of horrour[1]. But it is probable that at this period, whatever uneasiness he may have endured, he laid the foundation of much future eminence by application to his studies.

Being now again totally unoccupied, he was invited by Mr. Hector to pass some time with him at Birmingham, as his guest, at the house of Mr. Warren, with whom Mr. Hector lodged and boarded. Mr. Warren was the first established bookseller in Birmingham, and was very attentive to Johnson, who he soon found could be of much service to him in his trade, by his knowledge of literature; and he even obtained the assistance of his pen in furnishing some numbers of a periodical Essay, printed in the newspaper of which Warren was proprietor. After very diligent inquiry, I have not been able to recover those early specimens of that particular mode of writing by which Johnson afterwards so greatly distinguished himself.

He continued to live as Mr. Hector's guest for about six months, and then hired lodgings in another part of the town[2], finding himself as well situated at

mentably spent at Bosworth. The only probable solution of these difficulties is, that the walk to Bosworth on the 16th July, 1732, was not his first appearance there; but that having been called to Lichfield, to receive his share of his father's property, which, we have seen, p. 48, that he did on the 15th July, he *returned* to Bosworth on the 16th, perhaps for the purpose of making arrangements for finally leaving it, which he did within ten days. It seems very extraordinary, that the laborious diligence, and the lively curiosity of Hawkins, Boswell, Murphy, and Malone, were able to discover so little of the history of Johnson's life from December, 1729, to his marriage in July, 1736, and that what they have told should be liable to so much doubt. It may be inferred, that it was a period to which Johnson looked back with little satisfaction, and of which he did not love to talk; though it cannot be doubted that, during these five or six important years, he must have collected a large portion of that vast stock of information, with which he afterwards surprised and delighted the world.—Ed.]

[1] [There seems reason to suspect that Sir Wolstan Dixie's temper was, to say the least of it, *irregular* and violent; but it must also be recollected, that Johnson's own mind had recently been in a state of morbid disturbance.—Ed.]

[2] Sir John Hawkins states, from one of Johnson's diaries, that he lodged, in June, 1733, in Birmingham, at the house of a person named Jervis, probably

Birmingham as he supposed he could be any where, while he had no settled plan of life, and very scanty means of subsistence. He made some valuable acquaintances there, amongst whom were Mr. Porter, a mercer, whose widow he afterwards married, and Mr. Taylor, who, by his ingenuity in mechanical inventions, and his success in trade, acquired an immense fortune. But the comfort of being near Mr. Hector, his old schoolfellow and intimate friend, was Johnson's chief inducement to continue here.

In what manner he employed his pen at this period, or whether he derived from it any pecuniary advantage, I have not been able to ascertain. He probably got a little money from Mr. Warren; and we are certain, that he executed here one piece of literary labour, of which Mr. Hector has favoured me with a minute account. Having mentioned that he had read at Pembroke College a Voyage to Abyssinia, by Lobo (a Portuguese Jesuit), and that he thought an Abridgement and translation of it from the French into English might be an useful and profitable publication, Mr. Warren and Mr. Hector joined in urging him to undertake it. He accordingly agreed; and the book not being to be found in Birmingham, he borrowed it of Pembroke College. A part of the work being very soon done, one Osborn, who was Mr. Warren's printer, was set to work with what was ready, and Johnson engaged to supply the press with copy as it should be wanted; but his constitutional indolence soon prevailed, and the work was at a stand. Mr. Hector, who knew that a motive of humanity would be the most prevailing argument with his friend, went to Johnson, and represented to him that the printer could have no other employment till this undertaking was finished, and that the poor man

a relation of Mrs. Porter, whom he afterwards married, and whose maiden name was Jervis.—MALONE.

and his family were suffering. Johnson, upon this, exerted the powers of his mind, though his body was relaxed. He lay in bed with the book, which was a quarto, before him, and dictated while Hector wrote. Mr. Hector carried the sheets to the press, and corrected almost all the proof sheets, very few of which were even seen by Johnson. In this manner, with the aid of Mr. Hector's active friendship, the book was completed, and was published in 1735, with London upon the title-page, though it was in reality printed at Birmingham, a device too common with provincial publishers. For this work he had from Mr. Warren only the sum of five guineas.

This being the first prose work of Johnson, it is a curious object of inquiry how much may be traced in it of that style which marks his subsequent writings with such peculiar excellence—with so happy an union of force, vivacity, and perspicuity. I have perused the book with this view, and have found that here, as I believe in every other translation, there is in the work itself no vestige of the translator's own style; for the language of translation being adapted to the thoughts of another person, insensibly follows their cast, and, as it were, runs into a mould that is ready prepared.

Thus, for instance, taking the first sentence that occurs at the opening of the book, p. 4:

"I lived here above a year, and completed my studies in divinity; in which time some letters were received from the fathers of Ethiopia, with an account that Sultan Segned, Emperour of Abyssinia, was converted to the church of Rome; that many of his subjects had followed his example, and that there was a great want of missionaries to improve these prosperous beginnings. Every body was very desirous of seconding the zeal of our fathers, and of sending them the assistance they requested; to which we were the more encouraged, because the emperour's letter informed our provincial that we might easily enter his dominions by the way of Dancala; but, un-

happily, the secretary wrote Geila for Dancala, which cost two of our fathers their lives."

Every one acquainted with Johnson's manner will be sensible that there is nothing of it here; but that this sentence might have been composed by any other man.

But, in the Preface, the Johnsonian style begins to appear; and though use had not yet taught his wing a permanent and equable flight, there are parts of it which exhibit his best manner in full vigour. I had once the pleasure of examining it with Mr. Edmund Burke, who confirmed me in this opinion by his superiour critical sagacity, and was, I remember, much delighted with the following specimen:

"The Portuguese traveller, contrary to the general vein of his countrymen, has amused his reader with no romantick absurdity, or incredible fictions; whatever he relates, whether true or not, is at least probable; and he who tells nothing exceeding the bounds of probability, has a right to demand that they should believe him who cannot contradict him.

"He appears, by his modest and unaffected narration, to have described things as he saw them, to have copied nature from the life, and to have consulted his senses, not his imagination. He meets with no basilisks that destroy with their eyes, his crocodiles devour their prey without tears, and his cataracts fall from the rocks without deafening the neighbouring inhabitants.

"The reader will here find no regions cursed with irremediable barrenness, or blest with spontaneous fecundity; no perpetual gloom, or unceasing sunshine; nor are the nations here described, either devoid of all sense of humanity, or consummate in all private or social virtues. Here are no Hottentots without religious policy or articulate language; no Chinese perfectly polite and completely skilled in all sciences; he will discover, what will always be discovered by a diligent and impartial inquirer, that wherever human nature is to be found, there is a mixture of vice and virtue, a contest of passion and reason; and that the Creator doth not appear partial in his distributions, but has balanced, in most countries, their particular inconveniences by particular favours."

Here we have an early example of that brilliant and energetick expression, which, upon innumerable occa-

sions in his subsequent life, justly impressed the world with the highest admiration.

Nor can any one, conversant with the writings of Johnson, fail to discern his hand in this passage of the Dedication to John Warren, Esq. of Pembrokeshire, though it is ascribed to Warren the bookseller.

"A generous and elevated mind is distinguished by nothing more certainly than an eminent degree of curiosity[1]; nor is that curiosity ever more agreeably or usefully employed, than in examining the laws and customs of foreign nations. I hope, therefore, the present I now presume to make, will not be thought improper; which, however, it is not my business as a dedicator to commend, nor as a bookseller to depreciate."

It is reasonable to suppose, that his having been thus accidentally led to a particular study of the history and manners of Abyssinia, was the remote occasion of his writing, many years afterwards, his admirable philosophical tale, the principal scene of which is laid in that country.

Johnson returned to Lichfield early in 1734, and in August that year he made an attempt to procure some little subsistence by his pen; for he published proposals for printing by subscription the Latin Poems of Politian[2]:

"*Angeli Politiani Poemata Latina, quibus, Notas cum historiâ Latinæ poeseos à Petrarchæ ævo ad Politiani tempora deductâ, et vitâ Politiani fusius quam antehac enarratâ, addidit* SAM. JOHNSON[3]."

[1] See *Rambler*, No. 103. [Curiosity is the thirst of the soul, &c.—ED.]

[2] May we not trace a fanciful similarity between Politian and Johnson? Huetius, speaking of Paulus Pelissonius Fontanerius, says "—in quo Natura, ut olim in Angelo Politiano, deformitatem oris excellentis ingenii præstantia compensavit."—Comment. de reb. ad eum pertin. Edit. Amstel. 1718. p. 200. —BOSWELL. [In this learned masquerade of *Paulus Pelissonius Fontanerius*, we have some difficulty in detecting Madame de Sevigné's friend, *M. Pelisson*, of whom another of that lady's friends, M. de Guilleragues, used the phrase, which has since grown into a proverb, "qu'il abusait de la permission qu'ont les *hommes* d'etre laids."—See *Madame de Sevigné's letter, 5th Jan.* 1674.—Huet, Bishop of Avranche, wrote Memoirs of his own time, in Latin, from which Boswell has extracted this scrap of pedantry.—ED.]

[3] The book was to contain more than thirty sheets, the price to be two shillings and sixpence at the time of subscribing, and two shillings and sixpence at the delivery of a perfect book in quires.—BOSWELL.

It appears that his brother Nathanael had taken up his father's trade [1]; for it is mentioned that "subscriptions are taken in by the Editor, or N. Johnson, bookseller, of Lichfield." Notwithstanding the merit of Johnson, and the cheap price at which this book was offered, there were not subscribers enough to ensure a sufficient sale; so the work never appeared, and, probably, never was executed.

We find him again this year at Birmingham, and there is preserved the following letter from him to Mr. Edward Cave [2], the original compiler and editor of the Gentleman's Magazine:

"TO MR. CAVE.

"Nov. 25, 1734.

"SIR,—As you appear no less sensible than your readers of the defects of your poetical article, you will not be displeased, if, in order to the improvement of it, I communicate to you the sentiments of a person, who will undertake, on reasonable terms, sometimes to fill a column.

"His opinion is, that the publick would not give you a bad reception, if, beside the current wit of the month, which a critical examination would generally reduce to a narrow compass, you admitted not only poems, inscriptions, &c. never printed before, which he will sometimes supply you with; but likewise short literary dissertations in Latin or English, critical

[1] [Nathanael kept the shop as long as he lived, as did his mother, after him, till her death, though on somewhat, it is to be presumed, of a lowered scale. Miss Seward, who, in such a matter as this, may perhaps be trusted, tells us that Miss Lucy Porter, from the age of twenty to her fortieth year (when she was raised to a state of competency by the death of her eldest brother), "had boarded in Lichfield with Dr. Johnson's mother, who still kept that little bookseller's shop by which her husband had supplied the scanty means of subsistence; meantime Lucy Porter kept the best company in our little city, but would make no engagement on market-days, lest *Granny*, as she called Mrs. Johnson, should catch cold by serving in the shop. There Lucy Porter took her place, standing behind the counter, nor thought it a disgrace to thank a poor person who purchased from her a penny battledoor."—*Lett.* I. 117.—ED.]

[2] Miss Cave, the grand-niece of Mr. Edw. Cave, has obligingly shown me the originals of this and the other letters of Dr. Johnson to him, which were first published in the Gentleman's Magazine, with notes by Mr. John Nichols, the worthy and indefatigable editor of that valuable miscellany, signed N.; some of which I shall occasionally transcribe in the course of this work.—BOSWELL.

[The present editor has felt justified by this and many other testimonies to the accuracy of Mr. Nichols, to admit into his notes and even into the text the information supplied by him.—ED.]

remarks on authours ancient or modern, forgotten poems that deserve revival, or loose pieces, like Floyer's[1], worth preserving. By this method, your literary article, for so it might be called, will, he thinks, be better recommended to the publick than by low jests, awkward buffoonery, or the dull scurrilities of either party.

"If such a correspondence will[2] be agreeable to you, be pleased to inform me in two posts, what the conditions are on which you shall[2] expect it. Your late offer[3] gives me no reason to distrust your generosity. If you engage in any literary projects besides this paper, I have other designs to impart, if I could be secure from having others reap the advantage of what I should hint.

"Your letter by being directed to *S. Smith*, to be left at the Castle in Birmingham, Warwickshire, will reach

"Your humble servant."

Mr. Cave has put a note on this letter, "Answered Dec. 2." But whether any thing was done in consequence of it we are not informed[4].

ED. [In the year 1735, Mr. Walmesley's kindness endeavoured to procure him the mastership of the grammar school at Solihull in Warwickshire: this and the cause of failure appear by the following curious and characteristical letter, addressed to Mr. Walmesley, and preserved in the records of Pembroke College:

[1] Sir John Floyer's Treatise on Cold Baths. *Gent. Mag.* 1734, p. 197.

[2] [Is the use of *will* and *shall* in this sentence quite grammatical? Dr. Johnson seems sometimes to have used the word *shall* where it is now more customary to employ *may*: for instance, speaking of one dead, he said, "I trust he *shall* find mercy;"—and again, in his "Prayers and Meditations" (see extract, *post*, p. 66), Dr. Hall (who has examined the original in the Pembroke MSS.), informs me, that "no rational wish is now left but that we *may* meet at last," &c. was at first written that we *shall* meet, and afterwards altered to *may*. It may seem presumptuous to differ from Dr. Johnson on a grammatical point, but the *norma loquendi* of the present day would hardly tolerate the use of the word *shall* in any of the foregoing cases.—ED.]

[3] A prize of fifty pounds for the best poem on "Life, Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell." See *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. iv. p. 560.—NICHOLS. [A second prize of forty pounds, and some others of inferior value, were offered by Cave, at subsequent periods, for poems on similar subjects. It seems extraordinary that Johnson, whose wants were urgent, and who was glad, so soon after, to sell his LONDON for ten pounds, did not endeavour to obtain Cave's prize. Did his dignity of mind reject such a Mecænas as Cave? or did he make the attempt and afterwards conceal his failure in prudential silence?—ED.]

[4] [Sir J. Hawkins, who gives us to understand that he had seen Cave's answer, says, that "he thereon accepted the services of Johnson, and retained him as a correspondent and contributor to his Magazine" (p. 29), but his subsequent correspondence with Cave seems to negative this early connexion.—ED.]

"Solihull ye 30 August, 1735. Pemb.

"SIR,—I was favoured with yours of ye 13th inst. in due time, MSS. but deferred answering it til now, it takeing up some time to informe the ffœofees [of the school] of the contents thereof; and before they would return an Answer, desired some time to make enquiry of ye caracter of Mr. Johnson, who all agree that he is an excellent scholar, and upon that account deserves much better than to be schoolmaster of Solihull. But then he has the caracter of being a very haughty ill-natured gent, and y^t he has such a way of distorting his fface (w^h though he ca'nt help) ye gent. think it may affect some young ladds; for these two reasons he is not approved on, ye late master Mr. Crompton's huffing the ffœofees being stil in their memory. However we are all exstreamly obliged to you for thinking of us, and for proposeing so good a schollar, but more especially is, dear sir, your very humble servant, HENRY GRESWOLD."

It was probably prior to this that a more humble Ed. attempt to obtain the situation of assistant in Mr. Budworth's school, at Brewood, had also failed, and for the same reasons. Mr. Budworth was certainly no Nichols. stranger to the learning and abilities of Johnson, as he more than once lamented his having been under the necessity of declining the engagement from an apprehension that the paralytic affection under which Johnson laboured through life might become the object of imitation or ridicule amongst his pupils. This anecdote Captain Budworth, his grandson, confirmed to Mr. Nichols.]

Johnson had, from his early youth, been sensible to the influence of female charms. When at Stourbridge school, he was much enamoured of Olivia Lloyd, a young quaker, to whom he wrote a copy of verses, which I have not been able to recover[1]; but

[1] He also wrote some amatory verses, before he left Staffordshire, which our author appears not to have seen. They were addressed "to Miss Hickman, playing on the spinet." At the back of this early poetical effusion, of which the original copy, in Johnson's handwriting, was obligingly communicated to me [as it also was to the present editor] by Mr. John Taylor, is the following attestation:

"Written by the late Dr. Samuel Johnson, on my mother, then Miss Hickman, playing on the Spinet. J. Turton."

Dr. Turton, the physician, writer of this certificate, who died in April, 1806,

with what facility and elegance he could warble the amorous lay, will appear from the following lines which he wrote for his friend Mr. Edmund Hector.

Verses to a Lady, on receiving from her a Sprig of Myrtle.

"What hopes, what terrors does thy gift create,
Ambiguous emblem of uncertain fate!
The myrtle, ensign of supreme command,
Consign'd by Venus to Melissa's hand;
Not less capricious than a reigning fair,
Now grants, and now rejects a lover's prayer.
In myrtle shades oft sings the happy swain,
In myrtle shades despairing ghosts complain:
The myrtle crowns the happy lovers' heads,
The unhappy lover's grave the myrtle spreads;
O then the meaning of thy gift impart,
And ease the throbbings of an anxious heart!
Soon must this bough, as you shall fix his doom,
Adorn Philander's head, or grace his tomb[1]."

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in his 71st year, was born in 1735. The verses in question, therefore, which have been printed in some late editions of Johnson's poems, must have been written before that year.—Miss Hickman, it is believed, was a lady of Staffordshire.—MALONE.

[1] Mrs. Piozzi gives the following account of this little composition from Dr. Johnson's own relation to her, on her inquiring whether it was rightly attributed to him.—"I think it is now just forty years ago, that a young fellow had a sprig of myrtle given him by a girl he courted, and asked me to write him some verses that he might present her in return. I promised, but forgot; and when he called for his lines at the time agreed on—Sit still a moment, (says I) dear *Mund*, and I'll fetch them thee—so stepped aside for five minutes, and wrote the nonsense you now keep such a stir about."—*Anecdotes*, p. 34.

In my first edition I was induced to doubt the authenticity of this account; by the following circumstantial statement in a letter to me from Miss Seward of Lichfield:—"I *know* those verses were addressed to Lucy Porter, when he was enamoured of her in his boyish days, two or three years before he had seen her mother, his future *wife*. He wrote them at my grandfather's [Mr. Hunter, the schoolmaster], and gave them to Lucy in the presence of my mother, to whom he showed them on the instant. She used to repeat them to me, when I asked her for *the Verses Dr. Johnson gave her on a Sprig of Myrtle, which he had stolen or begged from her bosom.* We all know honest Lucy Porter to have been incapable of the mean vanity of applying to herself a compliment not *intended* for her." Such was this lady's statement, which I make no doubt she supposed to be correct; but it shows how dangerous it is to trust too implicitly to traditional testimony and ingenious inference; for Mr. Hector has lately assured me that Mrs. Piozzi's account is in this instance accurate, and that he was the person [as his name *Edmund* additionally proves] for whom Johnson wrote those verses, which have been erroneously ascribed to Mr. Hammond.

I am obliged in so many instances to notice Mrs. Piozzi's incorrectness of relation, that I gladly seize this opportunity of acknowledging, that however often, she is not always inaccurate.

The authour having been drawn into a controversy with Miss Anna Seward, in consequence of the preceding statement (which may be found in "the *Gentleman's Magazine*," vol. lxiii. and lxiv.), received the following letter from Mr. Hector, on the subject:

His juvenile attachments to the fair sex were, however, very transient: and it is certain, that he formed no criminal connexion whatsoever. Mr. Hector, who lived with him in his younger days in the utmost intimacy and social freedom, has assured me, that even at that ardent season his conduct was strictly virtuous in that respect; and that though he loved to exhilarate himself with wine, he never knew him intoxicated but once.

In a man whom religious education has secured from licentious indulgences, the passion of love, when once it has seized him, is exceedingly strong; being unimpaired by dissipation, and totally concentrated in one object. This was experienced by Johnson, when he became the fervent admirer of Mrs. Porter, after her first husband's death. Miss Porter told me, that when he was first introduced to her mother, his appearance was very forbidding; he was then lean and lank, so that his immense structure of bones was hideously striking to the eye, and the scars of

"DEAR SIR,—I am sorry to see you are engaged in altercation with a lady, who seems unwilling to be convinced of her errors. Surely it would be more ingenuous to acknowledge than to persevere.

"Lately, in looking over some papers I meant to burn, I found the original manuscript of the *myrtle*, with the date on it, 1731, which I have enclosed. . .

"The true history (which I could swear to) is as follows: Mr. Morgan Graves, the elder brother of a worthy clergyman near Bath, with whom I was acquainted, waited upon a lady in this neighbourhood, who at parting presented him the branch. He showed it me, and wished much to return the compliment in verse. I applied to Johnson, who was with me, and in about half an hour dictated the verses which I sent to my friend.

"I most solemnly declare, at that time, Johnson was an entire stranger to the Porter family; and it was almost two years after that I introduced him to the acquaintance of Porter, whom I bought my clothes of.

"If you intend to convince this obstinate woman, and to exhibit to the publick the truth of your narrative, you are at liberty to make what use you please of this statement.

"I hope you will pardon me for taking up so much of your time. Wishing you *multos et felices annos*, I shall subscribe myself your obliged humble servant, E. HECTOR.—Birmingham, Jan. 9th, 1794."—BOSWELL. [Of the supposed attachment of Dr. Johnson to the daughter of his wife there is no evidence whatsoever, but the assertion of Miss Seward, whose anecdotes have turned out to be in almost every instance worse than nothing; and, in this case, if it were worth while to seek for any evidence beyond Mr. Hector's, the dates would disprove Miss Seward's statement, which it is but too evident that she made with the view of disparaging and ridiculing Dr. Johnson.—ED.]

the scrofula were deeply visible. He also wore his hair, which was straight and stiff, and separated behind; and he often had, seemingly, convulsive starts and odd gesticulations, which tended to excite at once surprise and ridicule. Mrs. Porter was so much engaged by his conversation that she overlooked all these external disadvantages, and said to her daughter, "this is the most sensible man that I ever saw in my life."

Though Mrs. Porter was double the age of Johnson[1], and her person and manner, as described to me by the late Mr. Garrick, were by no means pleasing to others[2], she must have had a superiority of understanding and talents, as she certainly inspired him with more than ordinary passion; and she having signified her willingness to accept of his hand, he went to Lichfield to ask his mother's consent to the marriage; which he could not but be conscious was a very imprudent scheme, both on account of their disparity of years, and her want of fortune. But Mrs. Johnson knew too well the ardour of her son's temper, and was too tender a parent to oppose his inclinations[3].

I know not for what reason the marriage ceremony was not performed at Birmingham; but a resolution was taken that it should be at Derby, for which place

[1] Though there was a great disparity of years between her and Dr. Johnson, she was not quite so old as she is here represented, having only completed her forty-eighth year in the month of February preceding her marriage, as appears by the following extract from the parish-register of Great Peatling, in Leicestershire, which was obligingly made at my request, by the Hon. and Rev. Mr. Ryder, rector of Lutterworth, in that county:

"Anno Dom. 1688-9. Elizabeth, daughter of William Jervis, Esq. and Mrs. Anne, his wife, was born the 4th day of February and *manè*, baptized 16th day of the same month by Mr. Smith, curate of Little Peatling.

"John Allen, Vicar."—MALONE.

[Johnson's size, hard features, and decided manners, probably made him look older than he really was, and diminished the apparent disproportion.—ED.]

[2] That in Johnson's eyes she was handsome, appears from the epitaph which he caused to be inscribed on her tomb-stone not long before his own death, and which may be found in a subsequent page, under the year 1752.—MALONE.

[3] [See *ante*, p. 5, n.—ED.]

the bride and bridegroom set out on horseback, I suppose in very good humour. But though Mr. Topham Beauclerk used archly to mention Johnson's having told him with much gravity, "Sir, it was a love-marriage on both sides," I have had from my illustrious friend the following curious account of their journey to church upon the nuptial morn: (9th July)—"Sir, she had read the old romances, and had got into her head the fantastical notion that a woman of spirit should use her lover like a dog. So, sir, at first she told me that I rode too fast, and she could not keep up with me; and, when I rode a little slower, she passed me, and complained that I lagged behind. I was not to be made the slave of caprice; and I resolved to begin as I meant to end. I therefore pushed on briskly, till I was fairly out of her sight. The road lay between two hedges, so I was sure she could not miss it; and I contrived that she should soon come up with me. When she did, I observed her to be in tears."

This, it must be allowed, was a singular beginning of connubial felicity; but there is no doubt that Johnson, though he thus showed a manly firmness, proved a most affectionate and indulgent husband to the last moment of Mrs. Johnson's life: and in his "Prayers and Meditations," we find very remarkable evidence that his regard and fondness for her never ceased, even after her death.

[For instance:

"Wednesday, March 28, 1770.

"This is the day on which, in 1752, I was deprived of poor dear Tetty. Having left off the practice of thinking on her with some particular combinations, I have recalled her to my mind of late less frequently; but when I recollect the time in which we lived together, my grief for her departure is not abated; and I have less pleasure in any good that befals me, because she does not partake it. On many occasions, I think what she would have Prayers & Med. p.90,91.

said or done. When I saw the sea at Brighthelmstone, I wished for her to have seen it with me. But with respect to her, no rational wish is now left, but that we may meet at last where the mercy of God shall make us happy, and perhaps make us instrumental to the happiness of each other. It is now eighteen years."

He now set up a private academy, for which purpose he hired a large house, well situated near his native city. In the Gentleman's Magazine for 1736[1], there is the following advertisement:

"At Edial, near Lichfield, in Staffordshire, young gentlemen are boarded and taught the Latin and Greek languages, by SAMUEL JOHNSON[2]."

But the only pupils that were put under his care were the celebrated David Garrick and his brother George, and a Mr. Offely, a young gentleman of good fortune who died early. As yet, his name had nothing of that celebrity which afterwards commanded the highest attention and respect of mankind. Had such an advertisement appeared after the publication of his London, or his Rambler, or his Dictionary, how would it have burst upon the world! with what eagerness would the great and the wealthy have embraced an opportunity of putting their sons under the learned tuition of Samuel Johnson! The truth, however, is, that he was not so well qualified for being a teacher of elements, and a conductor in learning by regular gradations, as men of inferior powers of mind. His own acquisitions had been made by fits and starts, by violent irruptions into the regions of knowledge; and

[1] [This project must have been formed before his marriage, for the advertisement appears in the Magazine for June and July, 1736. Is it not possible, that the obvious advantage of having a woman of experience to superintend an establishment of this kind may have contributed to a match so disproportionate in point of age?—ED.]

[2] [It may be observed, as an additional proof of the public respect for, and curiosity about, Dr. Johnson, that one of the few plates in Harwood's History of Lichfield is a view of "Edial Hall, the residence of Dr. Samuel Johnson;" and Mr. Harwood adds, "the house has undergone no material alteration since it was inhabited by this *illustrious* tenant."—*Har. Hist. Lich.* p. 564.—ED.]

it could not be expected that his impatience would be subdued, and his impetuosity restrained, so as to fit him for a quiet guide to novices. The art of communicating instruction, of whatever kind, is much to be valued; and I have ever thought that those who devote themselves to this employment, and do their duty with diligence and success, are entitled to very high respect from the community, as Johnson himself often maintained. Yet I am of opinion, that the greatest abilities are not only not required for this office, but render a man less fit for it.

While we acknowledge the justness of Thomson's beautiful remark,

> "Delightful task! to rear the tender thought,
> And teach the young idea how to shoot!"

we must consider[1] that this delight is perceptible only by "a mind at ease," a mind at once calm and clear; but that a mind gloomy and impetuous, like that of Johnson, cannot be fixed for any length of time in minute attention, and must be so frequently irritated by unavoidable slowness and errour in the advances of scholars, as to perform the duty, with little pleasure to the teacher, and no great advantage to the pupils. Good temper is a most essential requisite in a preceptor. Horace paints the character as *bland:*

> "—— *Ut pueris olim dant crustula* blandi
> *Doctores, elementa velint ut discere prima.*"

Johnson was not more satisfied with his situation as the master of an academy, than with that of the usher of a school; we need not wonder, therefore, that he did not keep his academy above a year and a half. From Mr. Garrick's account he did not appear

[1] [Thomson's beautiful remark is just, only because the poet applies it to the first education of a child by its own fond parents, and not to the drudgery of hired instruction in the advanced stages of learning.—Ed.]

to have been profoundly reverenced by his pupils. His oddities of manner, and uncouth gesticulations, could not but be the subject of merriment to them; and in particular, the young rogues used to listen at the door of his bedchamber, and peep through the keyhole, that they might turn into ridicule his tumultuous and awkward fondness for Mrs. Johnson, whom he used to name by the familiar appellation of *Tetty* or *Tetsey*, which, like *Betty* or *Betsey*, is provincially used as a contraction for *Elizabeth*, her christian name, but which to us seems ludicrous, when applied to a woman of her age and appearance. Mr. Garrick described her to me as very fat, with a bosom of more than ordinary protuberance, with swelled cheeks, of a florid red, produced by thick painting, and increased by the liberal use of cordials; flaring and fantastick in her dress, and affected both in her speech and her general behaviour[1]. I have seen Garrick exhibit her, by his exquisite talent of mimickry, so as to excite the heartiest bursts of laughter; but he, probably, as is the case in all such representations, considerably aggravated the picture.

That Johnson well knew the most proper course to be pursued in the instruction of youth[2], is authentically ascertained by the following paper in his own

[1] [In Loggan's drawing of the company at Tonbridge Wells, in 1748, engraved and published in Richardson's Correspondence, vol. 3, Mrs. Johnson's figure is not inferior to that of the other ladies (some of whom were fashionable beauties) either in shape or dress; but it is a slight sketch, and too small and indistinct to be relied upon for details: but she must have been a silly woman to have contracted so disproportionate an alliance.—Ed.]

[2] [That this crude sketch for the arrangement of the lower classes of a grammar school "*authentically ascertains* that Johnson well knew the *most proper* course to be pursued in the *instruction* of youth," is a bold and illogical assertion. It may even be doubted whether it is good as far as it goes, and whether the beginning with authors of *inferior latinity*, and allowing the assistance of *translations*, be indeed the *most proper* course of classical instruction; nor are we, while ignorant of the peculiar circumstances for which the paper was drawn up, entitled to conclude that it contains Dr. Johnson's mature and general sentiments, on even the narrow branch of education to which it refers. Indeed, in the second paper, Johnson advises his friend not to read "the *latter* authors till you are well versed in those of the *purer* ages."—Ed.]

hand-writing, given about this period to a relation, and now in the possession of Mr. John Nichols:

"*Scheme for the Classes of a Grammar School.*

"When the introduction, or formation of nouns and verbs, is perfectly mastered, let them learn

"Corderius by Mr. Clarke, beginning at the same time to translate out of the introduction, that by this means they may learn the syntax. Then let them proceed to

"Erasmus, with an English translation, by the same authour.

"Class II. learns Eutropius and Cornelius Nepos, or Justin, with the translation.

"N. B. The first class gets for their part every morning the rules which they have learned before, and in the afternoon learns the Latin rules of the nouns and verbs.

"They are examined in the rules which they have learned, every Thursday and Saturday.

"The second class does the same whilst they are in Eutropius; afterwards their part is in the irregular nouns and verbs, and in the rules for making and scanning verses. They are examined as the first.

"Class III. Ovid's Metamorphoses in the morning, and Cæsar's Commentaries in the afternoon.

"Practise in the Latin rules till they are perfect in them; afterwards in Mr. Leeds' Greek Grammar. Examined as before.

"Afterwards they proceed to Virgil, beginning at the same time to write themes and verses, and to learn Greek; from thence passing on to Horace, &c. as shall seem most proper[1].

"I know not well what books to direct you to, because you have not informed me what study you will apply yourself to. I believe it will be most for your advantage to apply yourself wholly to the languages, till you go to the university. The Greek authours I think it best for you to read are these:

"Cebes.	
"Ælian.	
"Lucian by Leeds.	Attick.
"Xenophon.	
"Homer.	Ionick.
"Theocritus.	Dorick.
"Euripides.	Attick and Dorick.

[1] [Mr. Boswell and all subsequent editors have printed these as *one* paper; but it seems clear that they are *two* separate schemes, the first for a school, the second for the individual studies of some young friend.—ED.]

"Thus you will be tolerably skilled in all the dialects, beginning with the Attick, to which the rest must be referred.

"In the study of Latin, it is proper not to read the latter authours, till you are well versed in those of the purest ages; as Terence, Tully, Cæsar, Sallust, Nepos, Velleius Paterculus, Virgil, Horace, Phædrus.

"The greatest and most necessary task still remains, to attain a habit of expression, without which knowledge is of little use. This is necessary in Latin, and more necessary in English; and can only be acquired by a daily imitation of the best and correctest authours. "SAM. JOHNSON."

While Johnson kept his academy, there can be no doubt that he was insensibly furnishing his mind with various knowledge; but I have not discovered that he wrote any thing except a great part of his tragedy of IRENE. Mr. Peter Garrick, the elder brother of David, told me that he remembered Johnson's borrowing the Turkish History of him, in order to form his play from it. When he had finished some part of it, he read what he had done to Mr. Walmsley, who objected to his having already brought his heroine into great distress, and asked him, "how can you possibly contrive to plunge her into deeper calamity!" Johnson, in sly allusion to the supposed oppressive proceedings of the court of which Mr. Walmsley was registrar, replied, "Sir, I can put her into the Spiritual Court!"

Mr. Walmsley, however, was well pleased with this proof of Johnson's abilities as a dramatick writer, and advised him to finish the tragedy, and produce it on the stage.

Johnson now thought of trying his fortune in London, the great field of genius and exertion, where talents of every kind have the fullest scope, and the highest encouragement. It is a memorable circumstance that his pupil David Garrick went thither at

the same time[1], with intent to complete his education, and follow the profession of the law, from which he was soon diverted by his decided preference for the stage.

This joint expedition of those two eminent men to the metropolis, was many years afterwards noticed in an allegorical poem on Shakspeare's Mulberry-tree, by Mr. Lovibond[2], the ingenious authour of "the Tears of Old May-day."

[1] Both of them used to talk pleasantly of this their first journey to London. Garrick, evidently meaning to embellish a little, said one day in my hearing, "We rode and tied." And the Bishop of Killaloe (Dr. Barnard) informed me, that at another time, when Johnson and Garrick were dining together in a pretty large company, Johnson humorously ascertaining the chronology of something, expressed himself thus: "That was the year when I came to London with twopence halfpenny in my pocket." Garrick, overhearing him, exclaimed, "Eh? what do you say? with twopence halfpenny in your pocket?" —JOHNSON: "Why, yes; when I came with twopence halfpenny in *my* pocket, and thou, Davy, with three halfpence in thine."—BOSWELL. [This *may* have been said in raillery, but could not have been true. Indeed Boswell, in the next page, acknowledges that Johnson had a little money at his arrival; but, however that may be, Garrick, a young gentleman coming to town, not as an adventurer, but to complete his education and prepare for the bar, could not have been in such indigent circumstances.—ED.]

[2] [Edward Lovibond, esq. was a gentleman residing at Hampton, who wrote, it seems, for *his own* amusement (and probably succeeded in *that* object), but whose works were little known in his own day, and are now quite neglected, though Doctor Anderson has introduced him into the Scotch edition of the British Poets, and noticed the two productions mentioned in the text in the following hyperbolic strain:

"The English language, probably, cannot boast a finer example of the power of poetry than the '*Tears of Old May-day*;' the happy union which it exhibits of *genius* and of *art* is so truly admirable, that it may be pronounced inimitable. His '*Mulberry-tree*,' an allegorical tale, is equally remarkable for fertility of invention, facility of expression, and propriety of application. Garrick and Dr. Johnson are characterised with equal happiness and skill!!!"—*Life of Lovibond.* To the editor this boasted allegory seems little better than rhymed nonsense; the meaning (if it has any) seems to be, that Shakspeare's works are a *mulberry-tree*, which Garrick climbs to gather the fruit, while Johnson, "less frolic," puts his "mighty haunches" to the trunk and shakes down

"Wither'd leaves, wither'd limbs, blighted fruits, blighted flowers,"

and when "rubbish enough" has been shaken down, poor *withered, blighted, rubbishy* Shakspeare is dismissed with the following elegant and complimentary salvo:

"Yet mistake me not, rabble, this tree 's a good tree;
Does honour, Dame Nature, to Britain and thee.
And the fruit on the top, take its merit in brief,
Makes a noble dessert, when the dinner 's *roast beef*."

Mr. Lovibond leaves us to guess what the *roast beef* is, compared to which SHAKSPEARE is but a *plate of mulberries*.—ED.]

They were recommended to Mr. Colson[1], an eminent mathematician and master of an academy, by the following letter from Mr. Walmsley:

"TO THE REVEREND MR. COLSON.

"Lichfield, March 2, 1737.

"DEAR SIR,—I had the favour of yours, and am extremely obliged to you; but I cannot say I had a greater affection for you upon it than I had before, being long since so much endeared to you, as well by an early friendship, as by your many excellent and valuable qualifications; and, had I a son of my own, it would be my ambition, instead of sending him to the university, to dispose of him as this young gentleman is.

"He, and another neighbour of mine, one Mr. Samuel Johnson, set out this morning for London together. David Garrick is to be with you early the next week, and Mr. Johnson to try his fate with a tragedy, and to get himself employed in some translation, either from the Latin or the French. Johnson is a very good scholar and poet, and I have great hopes will turn out a fine tragedy-writer. If it should any way lie in your way, doubt not but you would be ready to recommend and assist your countryman, "G. WALMSLEY."

How he employed himself upon his first coming

[1] The Reverend John Colson was bred at Emmanuel College in Cambridge, and in 1728, when George the Second visited that university, was created master of arts. About that time he became first master of the free school at Rochester, founded by Sir Joseph Williamson. In 1739, he was appointed Lucasian Professor of Mathematics in the University of Cambridge, on the death of Professor Sanderson, and held that office till 1751, when he died. He published Lectures on Experimental Philosophy, translated from the French of l'Abbé Nodet, 8vo. 1732, and some other tracts. Our author, it is believed, was mistaken in stating him to have been master of an academy. Garrick, probably, during his short residence at Rochester, lived in his house as a private pupil.—MALONE.

[Mr. Malone's note is not quite accurate. Mr. Colson was elected to Rochester school, not about 1728, but June 1, 1709; and the Abbé whose lectures Mr. Colson translated was *Nollet*, and not *Nodet*, and his lectures were not published in Paris till 1742. Mrs. Piozzi, and after her Mr. Malone, and, of course, all subsequent editors, have stated that the character of *Gelidus*, in the 24th Rambler, was meant to represent Mr. Colson; but this may be doubted, for, as Mr. Colson resided constantly at Rochester till his removal to Cambridge, it is not likely that Mr. Walmesley's letter could produce any intercourse or acquaintance between him and Johnson: and it appears, from Davies's *Life of Garrick* (vol. i. p. 14), a work revised by Johnson, that Mr. Colson's character could have no resemblance to the absurdities of *Gelidus*. This gentleman, commonly called *Professor* Colson, must not be confounded with Mr. Colson, Fellow of University College, Oxford, who was, as Lord Stowell informs me, an intimate friend of Dr. Johnson's, and not a little eccentric in his habits and manners.—ED.]

to London is not particularly known[1]. I never heard that he found any protection or encouragement by the means of Mr. Colson, to whose academy David Garrick went. Mrs. Lucy Porter told me, that Mr. Walmsley gave him a letter of introduction to Lintot his bookseller, and that Johnson wrote some things for him; but I imagine this to be a mistake, for I have discovered no trace of it, and I am pretty sure he told me, that Mr. Cave was the first publisher[2] by whom his pen was engaged in London.

He had a little money when he came to town, and he knew how he could live in the cheapest manner. His first lodgings were at the house of Mr. Norris, a staymaker, in Exeter-street, adjoining Catherine-street, in the Strand. "I dined (said he) very well for eight-pence, with very good company, at the Pine-Apple in New-street, just by. Several of them had travelled. They expected to meet every day; but did not know one another's names. It used to cost the rest a shilling, for they drank wine; but I had a cut of meat for sixpence, and bread for a penny, and gave the waiter a penny; so that I was quite well served, nay, better than the rest, for they gave the waiter nothing[3]."

[1] One curious anecdote was communicated by himself to Mr. John Nichols. Mr. Wilcox, the bookseller, on being informed by him that his intention was to get his livelihood as an author, eyed his robust frame attentively, and with a significant look, said, "You had better buy a porter's knot." He, however, added, "Wilcox was one of my best friends."—BOSWELL.

[Wilcox could only have been *one of his best friends* by affording him employment; perhaps this observation may lead to a discovery of some of Johnson's earlier publications.—ED.]

[2] [Perhaps he meant that Cave was the first to whom he was regularly and constantly *engaged*; but Wilcox and Lintot may have employed him occasionally; and Dodsley certainly printed his *London* before Cave had printed any thing of his but two or three trifles in the *Gentleman's Magazine*.—ED.]

[3] [But if we may trust Mr. Cumberland's recollection, he was about this time, or very soon after, reduced still lower; "for painful as it is to relate" (says that gentleman in his Memoirs, vol. 1. p. 355), "I have heard that illustrious scholar, Dr. Johnson, assert, and he never varied from the truth of fact, that he subsisted himself for a considerable space of time upon the scanty pittance of fourpence half penny per day." When we find Dr. Johnson tell unpleasant truths to, or of, other men, let us recollect that he does not appear to have spared himself on occasions in which he might be forgiven for having done so.—ED.]

He at this time, I believe, abstained entirely from fermented liquors: a practice to which he rigidly conformed for many years together, at different periods of his life[1].

His OFELLUS in the *Art of Living in London*, I have heard him relate, was an Irish painter, whom he knew at Birmingham, and who had practised his own precepts of economy for several years in the British capital. He assured Johnson, who, I suppose, was then meditating to try his fortune in London, but was apprehensive of the expense, "that thirty pounds a year was enough to enable a man to live there without being contemptible. He allowed ten pounds for clothes and linen. He said a man might live in a garret at eighteen-pence a week; few people would inquire where he lodged; and if they did, it was easy to say, 'Sir, I am to be found at such a place.' By spending threepence in a coffee-house, he might be for some hours every day in very good company; he might dine for sixpence, breakfast on bread and milk for a penny, and do without supper. On *clean-shirt-day* he went abroad, and paid visits." I have heard him more than once talk of his frugal friend, whom he recollected with esteem and kindness, and did not like to have one smile at

[1] [At this time his abstinence from wine may, perhaps, be attributed to poverty, but in his subsequent life he was restrained from that indulgence by, as it appears, moral, or rather medical considerations. He probably found by experience that wine, though it dissipated for a moment, yet eventually aggravated the hereditary disease under which he suffered; and perhaps it may have been owing to a long course of abstinence that his mental health seems to have been better in the latter than in the earlier portion of his life. He says, in his *Prayers and Meditations*, p. 73, "By abstinence from wine and suppers, I obtained sudden and great relief, and had freedom of mind restored to me; which I have wanted for all this year, without being able to find any means of obtaining it."—See also 16th September, 1773.—Selden had the same notion; for being consulted by a person of quality whose imagination was strangely disturbed, he advised him "not to disorder himself with eating or drinking; to eat very little supper, and say his prayers duly when he went to bed; and I (Selden) made but little question but he would be well in three or four days."—*Table Talk*, p. 17.

These remarks are important, because *depression of spirits* is too often treated on a contrary system, from ignorance of, or inattention to, what may be its *real* cause.—ED.]

the recital. "This man (said he, gravely) was a very sensible man, who perfectly understood common affairs: a man of a great deal of knowledge of the world, fresh from life, not strained through books. He borrowed a horse and ten pounds at Birmingham. Finding himself master of so much money, he set off for West Chester, in order to get to Ireland. He returned the horse, and probably the ten pounds too, after he got home."

Considering Johnson's narrow circumstances in the early part of his life, and particularly at the interesting æra of his launching into the ocean of London, it is not to be wondered at, that an actual instance, proved by experience, of the possibility of enjoying the intellectual luxury of social life upon a very small income, should deeply engage his attention, and be ever recollected by him as a circumstance of much importance. He amused himself, I remember, by computing how much more expense was absolutely necessary to live upon the same scale with that which his friend described, when the value of money was diminished by the progress of commerce. It may be estimated that double the money might now with difficulty be sufficient.

Amidst this cold obscurity, there was one brilliant circumstance to cheer him; he was well acquainted with Mr. Henry Hervey[1], one of the branches of the

[1] The Honourable Henry Hervey, third son of the first Earl of Bristol, quitted the army and took orders. He married a sister of Sir Thomas Aston, by whom he got the Aston estate, and assumed the name and arms of that family.—Vide *Collins's Peerage*.—BOSWELL.

The Honourable Henry Hervey was nearly of the same age with Johnson, having been born about nine months before him, in the year 1709. He married Catherine, the sister of Sir Thomas Aston, in 1739; and as that lady had seven sisters, she probably succeeded to the Aston estate on the death of her brother under his will. Mr. Hervey took the degree of master of arts at Cambridge, at the late age of thirty-five, in 1744; about which time, it is believed, he entered into holy orders.—MALONE. [Mr. Hervey's acquaintance and kindness Johnson probably owed to his friend Mr. Walmesley.—Walmesley and Hervey, it will be recollected, married sisters.—ED.]

noble family of that name, who had been quartered at Lichfield as an officer of the army, and had at this time a house in London, where Johnson was frequently entertained, and had an opportunity of meeting genteel company. Not very long before his death, he mentioned this, among other particulars of his life, which he was kindly communicating to me; and he described this early friend, "Harry Hervey," thus: "He was a very vicious[1] man, but very kind to me. If you call a dog HERVEY, I shall love him."

He told me he had now written only three acts of his IRENE, and that he retired for some time to lodgings at Greenwich, where he proceeded in it somewhat further, and used to compose, walking in the Park; but did not stay long enough at that place to finish it.

At this period we find the following letter from him to Mr. Edward Cave, which, as a link in the chain of his literary history, it is proper to insert:

"TO MR. CAVE.

"Greenwich, next door to the Golden Heart, Church-street, July 12, 1737.

"SIR,—Having observed in your papers very uncommon offers of encouragement to men of letters, I have chosen, being a stranger in London, to communicate to you the following design, which, I hope, if you join in it, will be of advantage to both of us.

"The History of the Council of Trent having been lately translated into French, and published with large notes by Dr. Le Courayer, the reputation of that book is so much revived in England, that, it is presumed, a new translation of it from the Italian[2], together with Le Courayer's notes from the French, could not fail of a favourable reception.

[1] [For the excesses which Dr. Johnson characterises as *vicious*, Mr. Hervey was, probably, as much to be *pitied* as blamed. He was very *eccentric*.—ED.]

[2] [This proves that Johnson had now acquired Italian—probably directed to that study by the volume of Petrarch (mentioned *ante*, p. 27), the latter part of which contained his Italian poems.—ED.]

"If it be answered, that the History is already in English, it must be remembered, that there was the same objection against Le Courayer's undertaking, with this disadvantage, that the French had a version by one of their best translators, whereas you cannot read three pages of the English history without discovering that the style is capable of great improvements; but whether those improvements are to be expected from this attempt, you must judge from the specimen, which, if you approve the proposal, I shall submit to your examination.

"Suppose the merit of the versions equal, we may hope that the addition of the notes will turn the balance in our favour, considering the reputation of the annotator.

"Be pleased to favour me with a speedy answer, if you are not willing to engage in this scheme; and appoint me a day to wait upon you, if you are.—I am, sir, your humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

It should seem from this letter, though subscribed with his own name, that he had not yet been introduced to Mr. Cave. We shall presently see what was done in consequence of the proposal which it contains.

In the course of the summer he returned to Lichfield, where he had left Mrs. Johnson, and there he at last finished his tragedy, which was not executed with his rapidity of composition upon other occasions, but was slowly and painfully elaborated. A few days before his death, while burning a great mass of papers, he picked out from among them the original unformed sketch of this tragedy, in his own handwriting, and gave it to Mr. Langton, by whose favour a copy of it is now in my possession. It contains fragments of the intended plot, and speeches for the different persons of the drama, partly in the raw materials of prose, partly worked up into verse; as also a variety of hints for illustration, borrowed from the Greek, Roman, and modern writers. The handwriting is very difficult to be read, even by those who were best acquainted with Johnson's mode of penmanship, which at all times was very particular.

The king having graciously accepted of this manuscript as a literary curiosity, Mr. Langton made a fair and distinct copy of it, which he ordered to be bound up with the original and the printed tragedy; and the volume is deposited in the king's library. His majesty was pleased to permit Mr. Langton to take a copy of it for himself.

The whole of it is rich in thought and imagery, and happy expressions; and of the *disjecta*[1] *membra* scattered throughout, and as yet unarranged, a good dramatick poet might avail himself with considerable advantage. I shall give my readers some specimens of different kinds, distinguishing them by the Italic character.

> "*Nor think to say, here will I stop,*
> *Here will I fix the limits of transgression,*
> *Nor further tempt the avenging rage of heaven.*
> *When guilt like this once harbours in the breast,*
> *Those holy beings, whose unseen direction*
> *Guides through the maze of life the steps of man,*
> *Fly the detested mansions of impiety,*
> *And quit their charge to horrour and to ruin.*"

A small part only of this interesting admonition is preserved in the play, and is varied, I think, not to advantage:

> "The soul once tainted with so foul a crime,
> No more shall glow with friendship's hallow'd ardour:
> Those holy beings whose superior care
> Guides erring mortals to the paths of virtue,
> Affrighted at impiety like thine,
> Resign their charge to baseness and to ruin."

> "*I feel the soft infection*
> *Flush in my cheek, and wander in my veins.*
> *Teach me the Grecian arts of soft persuasion.*"

"*Sure this is love, which heretofore I conceived the dream of idle maids, and wanton poets.*"

[1] [Disjecti membra poetæ. *Hor.*—Ed.]

"*Though no comets or prodigies foretold the ruin of Greece, signs which heaven must by another miracle enable us to understand, yet might it be foreshown, by tokens no less certain, by the vices which always bring it on.*"

This last passage is worked up in the tragedy itself, as follows:

LEONTIUS.

"——— That power that kindly spreads
The clouds, a signal of impending showers,
To warn the wand'ring linnet to the shade,
Behold, without concern, expiring Greece,
And not one prodigy foretold our fate.

DEMETRIUS.

A thousand horrid prodigies foretold it;
A feeble government, eluded laws,
A factious populace, luxurious nobles,
And all the maladies of sinking states.
When publick villany, too strong for justice,
Shows his bold front, the harbinger of ruin,
Can brave Leontius call for airy wonders,
Which cheats interpret, and which fools regard:
When some neglected fabrick nods beneath
The weight of years, and totters to the tempest,
Must heaven despatch the messengers of light,
Or wake the dead, to warn us of its fall?"

MAHOMET (to IRENE). "*I have tried thee, and joy to find that thou deservest to be loved by Mahomet,—with a mind great as his own. Sure, thou art an errour of nature, and an exception to the rest of thy sex, and art immortal; for sentiments like thine were never to sink into nothing. I thought all the thoughts of the fair had been to select the graces of the day, dispose the colours of the flaunting (flowing) robe, tune the voice and roll the eye, place the gem, choose the dress, and add new roses to the fading cheek, but—sparkling.*"

Thus in the tragedy:

"Illustrious maid, new wonders fix me thine;
Thy soul completes the triumphs of thy face;
I thought, forgive my fair, the noblest aim,
The strongest effort of a female soul,
Was but to choose the graces of the day,
To tune the tongue, to teach the eyes to roll,
Dispose the colours of the flowing robe,
And add new roses to the faded cheek."

I shall select one other passage, on account of the doctrine which it illustrates.

IRENE observes, "*that the Supreme Being will accept of virtue, whatever outward circumstances it may be accompanied with, and may be delighted with varieties of worship:* but is answered, *That variety cannot affect that Being, who, infinitely happy in his own perfections, wants no external gratifications; nor can infinite truth be delighted with falsehood; that though he may guide or pity those he leaves in darkness, he abandons those who shut their eyes against the beams of day.*"

Johnson's residence at Lichfield, on his return to it at this time, was only for three months; and as he had as yet seen but a small part of the wonders of the metropolis, he had little to tell his townsmen[1]. 20 Sept. 1773. He related to me the following minute anecdote of this period: "In the last age, when my mother lived in London, there were two sets of people, those who gave the wall, and those who took it: the peaceable and the quarrelsome. When I returned to Lichfield, after having been in London, my mother asked me, whether I was one of those who gave the wall, or those who took it. *Now* it is fixed that every man keeps to the right; or if one is taking the wall, another yields it; and it is never a dispute."

He now removed to London with Mrs. Johnson; but her daughter, who had lived with them at Edial, was left with her relations[2] in the country. His lodgings were for some time in Woodstock-street, near Hanover-square, and afterwards in Castle-street, near Cavendish-square. As there is something pleasingly interesting, to many, in tracing so great a

[1] [On the contrary, if he lived after the manner of his Ofellus, he probably saw more of common life than when he was, in his subsequent residence, constrained by the presence of Mrs. Johnson to more domestic and regular habits.—ED.]

[2] [She very soon, it appears, resided with old Mrs. Johnson. See *ante*, p. 59. ED.]

man through all his different habitations, I shall present my readers with an exact list of his lodgings and houses, in order of time, which, in placid condescension to my respectful curiosity, he one evening dictated to me, but without specifying how long he lived at each [1]. 10 Oct. 1779.

1. Exeter-street, off Catherine-street, Strand [1737].
2. Greenwich [1737].
3. Woodstock-street, near Hanover-square [1737].
4. Castle-street, Cavendish-square, No. 6 [1738].
5. Boswell-court.
6. Strand.
7. Strand again.
8. Bow-street.
9. Holborn.
10. Fetter-lane.
11. Holborn again [at the Golden Anchor, Holborn-bars, 1748].
12. Gough-square [1748].
13. Staple-inn [1758].
14. Gray's-inn.
15. Inner Temple-lane, No. 1 [1760].
16. Johnson-court, Fleet-street, No. 7 [1765].
17. Bolt-court, Fleet-street, No. 8 [1777].

In the progress of his life I shall have occasion to mention some of them as connected with particular incidents, or with the writing of particular parts of his works. To some, this minute attention may appear trifling; but when we consider the punctilious exactness with which the different houses in which Milton resided have been traced by the writers of his life, a similar enthusiasm may be pardoned in the biographer of Johnson.

His tragedy being by this time, as he thought,

[1] [This list Mr. Boswell placed under the date at which it was dictated to him. It seems more conveniently introduced here, and the editor has added, as far as he has discovered, the year in which Johnson *first* appears in any of these residences.—Ed.]

completely finished and fit for the stage, he was very desirous that it should be brought forward. Mr. Peter Garrick told me, that Johnson and he went together to the Fountain tavern, and read it over, and that he afterwards solicited Mr. Fleetwood, the patentee of Drury-lane theatre, to have it acted at his house; but Mr. Fleetwood would not accept it, probably because it was not patronized by some man of high rank; and it was not acted till 1749, when his friend David Garrick was manager of that theatre.

The Gentleman's Magazine, begun and carried on by Mr. Edward Cave, under the name of Sylvanus Urban, had attracted the notice and esteem of Johnson, in an eminent degree, before he came to London as an adventurer in literature. He told me, that when he first saw *St. John's Gate*, the place where that deservedly popular miscellany was originally printed, he "beheld it with [1] reverence." I suppose, indeed, that every young authour has had the same kind of feeling for the magazine or periodical publication which has first entertained him, and in which he has first had an opportunity to see himself in print, without the risk of exposing his name. I myself recollect such impressions from "The Scots Magazine," which was begun at Edinburgh in the year 1739, and has been ever conducted with judgment, accuracy, and propriety. I yet cannot help thinking

[1] [If, as Mr. Boswell supposes, Johnson looked at St. John's Gate as the printing office of Cave, surely a less emphatical term than *reverence* would have been more just. The *Gentleman's Magazine* had been at this time but six years before the publick, and its contents were, until Johnson himself contributed to improve it, entitled to any thing rather than *reverence*; but it is much more probable that Johnson's *reverence* was excited by the recollections connected with the ancient gate itself, the last relique of the once extensive and magnificent priory of the heroic knights of the order of St. John of Jerusalem, suppressed at the dissolution, and destroyed by successive dilapidations. Its last prior, Sir William Weston, though compensated with the annual pension (enormous in those days) of 1000*l.* died of a broken heart, on Ascension-day, 1540, the very day the house was suppressed.—Ed.]

of it with an affectionate regard. Johnson has dignified the Gentleman's Magazine by the importance with which he invests the life of Cave; but he has given it still greater lustre by the various admirable Essays which he wrote for it.

Though Johnson was often solicited by his friends to make a complete list of his writings, and talked of doing it, I believe with a serious intention that they should all be collected on his own account, he put it off from year to year, and at last died without having done it perfectly. I have one in his own hand-writing, which contains a certain number; I indeed doubt if he could have remembered every one of them, as they were so numerous, so various, and scattered in such a multiplicity of unconnected publications; nay, several of them published under the names of other persons, to whom he liberally contributed from the abundance of his mind. We must, therefore, be content to discover them, partly from occasional information given by him to his friends, and partly from internal evidence [1].

His first performance in the Gentleman's Magazine, which for many years was his principal resource for employment and support, was a copy of Latin verses, in March, 1738, addressed to the editor in so happy a style of compliment, that Cave must have been destitute both of taste and sensibility [2], had he not felt himself highly gratified.

[1] While in the course of my narrative I enumerate his writings, I shall take care that my readers shall not be left to waver in doubt, between certainty and conjecture, with regard to their authenticity, and, for that purpose, shall mark with an *asterisk* (*) those which he acknowledged to his friends, and with a *dagger* (†) those which are ascertained to be his by internal evidence. When any other pieces are ascribed to him, I shall give my reasons.—BOSWELL.

[2] [Taste and sensibility were very certainly not the distinguishing qualities of Cave; but was this ode, indeed, "*a happy style of compliment?*" Are "*fronte sertum in eruditâ*"—"*Linguæ plumbea spicula*"—"*Victrix per obstantes catervas*"—*Lycoris* and *Iris*—the *rose*—the *violet*—and the *rainbow*—in any way

"*Ad* URBANUM*.

URBANE, *nullis fesse laboribus,*
URBANE, *nullis victe calumniis,*
Cui fronte sertum in eruditâ
Perpetuò viret et virebit;

Quid moliatur gens imitantium,
Quid et minetur, solicitus parùm,
Vacare solis perge Musis,
Juxta animo studiisque felix.

Linguæ procacis plumbea spicula,
Fidens, superbo frange silentio;
Victrix per obstantes catervas
Sedulitas animosa tendet.

Intende nervos, fortis, inanibus
Risurus olim nisibus æmuli;
Intende jam nervos, habebis
Participes operæ Camœnas.

Non ulla Musis pagina gratior,
Quam quæ severis ludicra jungere
Novit, fatigatamque nugis
Utilibus recreare mentem.

Texente Nymphis serta Lycoride,
Rosæ ruborem sic viola adjuvat
Immista, sic Iris refulget
Æthereis variata fucis. S. J."

It appears that he was now inlisted by Mr. Cave as a regular coadjutor in his magazine, by which he probably obtained a tolerable livelihood.

Hawk. p. 50. [This drew Johnson into a close intimacy with Cave: he was much at St. John's Gate, and taught Garrick the

appropriate to the printer of St. John's Gate, his magazine, or his antagonists? How Johnson would in later life have derided, in *another*, such misapplied pedantry! Mr. Murphy surmises that "this ode may have been suggested to the mind of Johnson, who had meditated a history of the modern Latin poets (see *ante*, p. 58), by Casimir's ode to Pope Urban,

'Urbane regum maxime, maxime
Urbane vatum.'"—ED.]

A translation of this Ode, by an unknown correspondent, appeared in the Magazine for the month of May following.—BOSWELL. [As did, in 1784, another, attributed by Mr. Nichols to Mr. Jackson, of Canterbury.—ED.]

way thither. Cave had no great relish for mirth, but he could bear it; and having been told by Johnson, that his friend had talents for the theatre, and was come to London with a view to the profession of an actor, expressed a wish to see him in some comic character: Garrick readily complied; and, as Cave himself told me, with a little preparation of the room over the great arch of St. John's Gate, and, with the assistance of a few journeymen printers, who were called together for the purpose of reading the other parts, represented, with all the graces of comic humour, the principal character in Fielding's farce of the Mock-Doctor. Hawk. p. 50.

Cave's temper was phlegmatic: and though he assumed, as the publisher of the Magazine, the name of Sylvanus Urban, he had few of those qualities that constitute the character of urbanity. Judge of his want of them by this question, which he once put to an authour: "Mr. ——[1], I hear you have just published a pamphlet, and am told there is a very good paragraph in it, upon the subject of musick: did you write that yourself?" His discernment was also slow; and as he had already at his command some writers of prose and verse, who, in the language of booksellers, are called *good hands*, he was the backwarder in making advances, or courting an intimacy with Johnson. Upon the first approach of a stranger, his practice was to continue sitting, a posture in which he was ever to be found, and, for a few minutes, to continue silent: if at any time he was inclined to begin the discourse, it was generally by putting a leaf of the Magazine, then in the press, into the hand of his visitor, and asking his opinion of it. Sir John

[1] [Perhaps Hawkins himself.—Ed.]

Hawk. p. 50. Hawkins remembered that, calling in on him once, he gave him to read the beautiful poem of Collins, written for Shakspeare's Cymbeline, "To fair Fidele's grassy tomb," which, though adapted to a particular circumstance in the play, Cave was for inserting in his Magazine, without any reference to the subject: Hawkins told him it would lose of its beauty if it were so published: this he could not see; nor could he be convinced of the propriety of the name *Fidele:* he thought *Pastora* a better, and so printed it.

He was so incompetent a judge of Johnson's abilities, that, meaning at one time to dazzle him with the splendour of some of those luminaries in literature who favoured him with their correspondence, he told him that, if he would, in the evening, be at a certain ale-house in the neighbourhood of Clerkenwell, he might have a chance of seeing[1] Mr. Browne, and one or two other of the persons employed in the Magazine. Johnson accepted the invitation; and was introduced by Cave, dressed in a loose horseman's coat[2], and such a great bushy uncombed wig as he constantly wore, to the sight of Mr. Browne, whom he found sitting at the upper end of a long table, in a cloud of tobacco-smoke, had his curiosity gratified.

Johnson saw very clearly those offensive particulars that made a part of Cave's character; but, as he was one of the most quick-sighted men in discovering the good and amiable qualities of others, a faculty which he has displayed, as well in the life of Cave, as in that of Savage, printed among his works, so

[1] [About this period we find Mr. M. Browne a constant but feeble contributor to the Magazine.—Ed.]

[2] [This is a good description of the figure Johnson makes in the earliest portrait of him (if it can be so called) which we have, in the drawing by Loggan, in 1748. See *ante*, p. 68.—Ed.]

was he ever inclined to palliate their defects; and, Hawk. p. 50.
though he was above courting the patronage of a man, whom, for many reasons, he could not but hold cheap, he disdained not to accept it, when tendered with any degree of complacency.]

At what time, or by what means, he had acquired a competent knowledge both of[1] French and Italian, I do not know; but he was so well skilled in them, as to be sufficiently qualified for a translator. That part of his labour which consisted in emendation and improvement of the productions of other contributors, like that employed in levelling ground, can be perceived only by those who had an opportunity of comparing the original with the altered copy. What we certainly know to have been done by him in this way was the Debates in both houses of Parliament, under the name of "The Senate of Lilliput," sometimes with feigned denominations of the several speakers, sometimes with denominations formed of the letters of their real names, in the manner of what is called anagram, so that they might easily be deciphered. Parliament then kept the press in a kind of mysterious awe, which made it necessary to have recourse to such devices. In our time it has acquired an unrestrained freedom, so that the people in all parts of the kingdom have a fair, open, and exact report of the actual proceedings of their representatives and legislators, which in our constitution is highly to be valued; though, unquestionably, there has of late been too much reason to complain of the petulance with which obscure scribblers have presumed

[1] [French evidently early, as he translated Lobo in 1733; and, though he appears never to have attained ease and fluency in *speaking* that language, we see by his communication with General Paoli (10th Oct. 1769), and by a letter to a French lady (probably Madame de Boufflers), preserved by Mrs. Piozzi, that he could write it with idiomatic ease. We find that he proposed to translate Father Paul from the Italian, and in his letter to Cave, undated but prior to 1744, he gave an opinion on some Italian production.—ED.]

to treat men of the most respectable character and situation.

This important article of the Gentleman's Magazine was, for several years, executed by Mr. William Guthrie, a man who deserves to be respectably recorded in the literary annals of this country. He was descended of an ancient family in Scotland; but having a small patrimony, and being an adherent of the unfortunate house of Stuart, he could not accept of any office in the state; he therefore came to London, and employed his talents and learning as an "authour by profession." His writings in history, criticism, and politics, had considerable merit[1]. He was the first English historian who had recourse to that authentick source of information, the Parliamentary Journals; and such was the power of his political pen, that, at an early period, government thought it worth their while to keep it quiet by a pension, which he enjoyed till his death[2]. Johnson esteemed him enough to wish that his life should be written. The debates in Parliament, which were brought home and digested by Guthrie, whose memory, though surpassed by others who have since followed him in the same department, was yet very quick and tenacious, were sent by Cave to Johnson for his revision; and, after some time, when Guthrie had attained to greater variety of employment, and the speeches were more and more enriched by the accession of Johnson's genius, it was resolved that he should do the whole himself, from the scanty

[1] How much poetry he wrote, I know not; but he informed me that he was the authour of the beautiful little piece, "The Eagle and Robin Redbreast," in the collection of poems entitled "The Union," though it is there said to be written by Archibald Scott, before the year 1600.—BOSWELL.

[2] [See a letter, from Guthrie to the minister, offering his services, and fixing on "the quarterly payments, in Mr. D'Israeli's interesting work, "*The Calamities of Authors*," p. 5.—ED.]

notes furnished by persons employed to attend in both houses of Parliament. Sometimes, however, as he himself told me, he had nothing more communicated to him than the names of the several speakers, and the part which they had taken in the debate.

Thus was Johnson employed during some of the best years of his life, as a mere literary labourer "for gain, not glory," solely to obtain an honest support. He however indulged himself in occasional little sallies, which the French so happily express by the term *jeux d'esprit*, and which will be noticed in their order, in the progress of this work.

But what first displayed his transcendent powers, and "gave the world assurance of the MAN," was his "LONDON, a Poem, in Imitation of the Third Satire of Juvenal;" which came out in May this year, and burst forth with a splendour, the rays of which will for ever encircle his name. Boileau had imitated the same satire with great success, applying it to Paris: but an attentive comparison will satisfy every reader, that he is much excelled[1] by the English Juvenal. Oldham had also imitated it, and applied it to London; all which performances concur to prove, that great cities, in every age, and in every country, will furnish similar topicks of satire. Whether Johnson had previously read Oldham's imitation, I do not know; but it is not a little remarkable, that there is scarcely any coincidence found between the two performances, though upon the very same subject. The only instances are, in describing London as the *sink* of foreign worthlessness:

[1] [It is hardly fair to compare the poems in this hostile way: Boileau's was a mere *badinage*, complaining of, or laughing at, the *personal* dangers and inconveniences of Paris. Johnson's object was to satirise the *moral* depravity of a great city.—ED.]

"———— the *common shore*,
Where France does all her filth and ordure pour."
OLDHAM.

"The *common shore* of Paris and of Rome." JOHNSON.

and

"No calling or profession comes amiss:
A *needy monsieur* can be what he please." OLDHAM.

"All sciences a *fasting monsieur* knows." JOHNSON.

The particulars which Oldham has collected, both as exhibiting the horrours of London, and of the times contrasted with better days, are different from those of Johnson, and in general well chosen, and well expressed [1].

There are, in Oldham's imitation, many prosaick verses and bad rhymes, and his poem sets out with a strange inadvertent blunder:

"Tho' much concern'd to *leave* my dear old friend,
I must, however, *his* design commend
Of fixing in the country———."

It is plain he was not going to leave his *friend;* his friend was going to leave *him*. A young lady at once corrected this with good critical sagacity, to

"Tho' much concern'd to *lose* my old dear friend."

There is one passage in the original better transfused by Oldham than by Johnson:

"*Nil habet infelix paupertas durius in se,*
Quàm quod ridiculos homines facit:"

which is an exquisite remark on the galling meanness and contempt annexed to poverty. Johnson's imitation is,

[1] I own it pleased me to find amongst them one trait of the manners of the age in London, in the last century, to shield from the sneer of English ridicule, what was some time ago too common a practice in my native city of Edinburgh!

"If what I've said can't from the town affright,
Consider other *dangers of the night;*
When brickbats are from upper stories thrown,
And *emptied chamberpots come pouring down*
From garret windows."—BOSWELL.

"Of all the griefs that harass the distrest,
Sure the most bitter is a scornful jest."

Oldham's, though less elegant, is more just:

"Nothing in poverty so ill is borne,
As its exposing men to grinning scorn."

Where, or in what manner this poem was composed, I am sorry that I neglected to ascertain with precision from Johnson's own authority. He has marked upon his corrected copy of the first edition of it, "Written in 1738;" and, as it was published in the month of May in that year, it is evident that much time was not employed in preparing it for the press. The history of its publication I am enabled to give in a very satisfactory manner; and judging from myself, and many of my friends, I trust that it will not be uninteresting to my readers.

We may be certain, though it is not expressly named in the following letters to Mr. Cave, in 1738, that they all relate to it.

"TO MR. CAVE.

"Castle-street, Wednesday Morning, [March, 1738[1].]

"SIR,—When I took the liberty of writing to you a few days ago, I did not expect a repetition of this same pleasure so soon; for a pleasure I shall always think it, to converse in any manner with an ingenious and candid man; but having the enclosed poem in my hands to dispose of for the benefit of the authour (of whose abilities I shall say nothing, since I send you his performance), I believe I could not procure more advantageous terms from any person than from you, who have so much distinguished yourself by your generous encouragement of poetry; and whose judgement of that art nothing but your commendation of *my trifle* can give me any occasion to call in question. I do not doubt but you will look over this poem with another

[1] [The editor has ventured, from internal evidence, compared with the respective publications of the Ode *Ad Urbanum* (which was no doubt the *trifle* referred to in the first letter), of the *Epigram to Eliza*, and of *London* itself, to assign the dates of March and April, 1738, to these letters.—ED.]

eye, and reward it in a different manner from a mercenary bookseller, who counts the lines he is to purchase, and considers nothing but the bulk. I cannot help taking notice, that besides what the authour may hope for on account of his abilities, he has likewise another claim to your regard, as he lies at present under very disadvantageous circumstances of fortune. I beg, therefore, that you will favour me with a letter to-morrow, that I may know what you can afford to allow him, that he may either part with it to you, or find out (which I do not expect) some other way more to his satisfaction.

"I have only to add, that as I am sensible I have transcribed it very coarsely, which, after having altered it, I was obliged to do, I will, if you please to transmit the sheets from the press, correct it for you; and take the trouble of altering any stroke of satire which you may dislike.

"By exerting on this occasion your usual generosity, you will not only encourage learning, and relieve distress, but (though it be in comparison of the other motives of very small account) oblige in a very sensible manner, sir, your very humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MR. CAVE.

"Monday, No. 6, Castle-street, [March, 1738.]

"SIR,—I am to return you thanks for the present[1] you were so kind as to send by me, and to entreat that you will be pleased to inform me by the penny-post, whether you resolve to print the poem. If you please to send it me by the post, with a note to Dodsley, I will go and read the lines to him, that we may have his consent to put his name in the title-page. As to the printing, if it can be set immediately about, I will be so much the authour's friend, as not to content myself with mere solicitations in his favour. I propose, if my calculation be near the truth, to engage for the reimbursement of all that you shall lose by an impression of five hundred; provided, as you very generously propose, that the profit, if any, be set aside for the authour's use, excepting the present you made, which, if he be a gainer, it is fit he should repay. I beg that you will let one of your servants write an exact account of the expense of such an impression, and send it with the poem, that I may know

[1] [Though Cave had not taste enough to be struck with the value of the poem, he had, we see, charity enough to relieve the pressing wants of the author in the shape of a present.—ED.]

what I engage for. I am very sensible, from your generosity on this occasion, of your regard to learning, even in its unhappiest state; and cannot but think such a temper deserving of the gratitude of those who suffer so often from a contrary disposition.—I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MR. CAVE.

[April, 1738.]

"SIR,—I waited on you to take the copy to Dodsley's: as I remember the number of lines which it contains, it will be no longer than Eugenio[1], with the quotations, which must be subjoined at the bottom of the page; part of the beauty of the performance (if any beauty be allowed it) consisting in adapting Juvenal's sentiments to modern facts and persons. It will, with those additions, very conveniently make five sheets. And since the expense will be no more, I shall contentedly ensure it, as I mentioned in my last. If it be not therefore gone to Dodsley's, I beg it may be sent me by the penny-post, that I may have it in the evening. I have composed a Greek Epigram to Eliza[2], and think she ought to be celebrated in as many different languages as Lewis le Grand. Pray send me word when you will

[1] A poem, published in 1737, of which see an account, *post*, under April 30, 1773.—BOSWELL.

[2] The learned Mrs. Elizabeth Carter. This lady, of whom frequent mention will be found in these Memoirs, was daughter of Nicholas Carter, D.D. She [was born at Deal on the 14th December, 1717, and] died in Clarges-street, February 19, 1806—MALONE—[in the eighty-ninth year "of a life" (as the editor had the pleasure of saying on a former occasion) "sweetened and adorned by learning and by piety; by the friendship of those who approached her, and the respect of the world at large." Her early acquaintance with Johnson is thus noticed by her nephew and biographer: "Mr. Cave was much connected with the literary world, and his friendship for Mrs. Carter was the means of introducing her to many authours and scholars of note; among those was Mr. afterwards Dr. Johnson. This was early in his life, and his name was then but beginning to be known, having just published his celebrated Imitation of the Third Satire of Juvenal, under the name of *London*. Neither this work nor his general character were as yet much known in the country; for Dr. Carter, in a letter to his daughter, dated June 25, 1738, says: 'You mention Johnson; but that is a name with which I am utterly unacquainted. Neither his scholastic, critical, nor poetical character ever reached my ears. I a little suspect his judgement, *if he is very fond of Martial*.' This was evidently in answer to what his daughter had said of him; and it shows her high opinion of him before the judgement of the world could have had any considerable influence upon it. Their friendship continued as long as Johnson lived, and he always expressed the greatest esteem and regard for her. Notwithstanding the rudeness of his manners occasionally, even to women, I have frequently heard her say that he never treated her but with civility, attention, and respect." *Life of Mrs. Carter*, p. 39.—ED.]

begin upon the poem, for it is a long way to walk. I would leave my Epigram, but have not daylight to transcribe it.—I am, sir, yours, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MR. CAVE.

[April, 1738.]

"SIR,—I am extremely obliged by your kind letter, and will not fail to attend you to-morrow with Irene, who looks upon you as one of her best friends.

"I was to-day with Mr. Dodsley, who declares very warmly in favour of the paper you sent him, which he desires to have a share in, it being, as he says, *a creditable thing to be concerned in.* I knew not what answer to make till I had consulted you, nor what to demand on the authour's part, but am very willing that, if you please, he should have a part in it, as he will undoubtedly be more diligent to disperse and promote it. If you can send me word to-morrow what I shall say to him, I will settle matters, and bring the poem with me for the press, which, as the town empties[1], we cannot be too quick with.—I am, sir, yours, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

To us who have long known the manly force, bold spirit, and masterly versification of this poem, it is a matter of curiosity to observe the diffidence with which its authour brought it forward into publick notice, while he is so cautious as not to avow it to be his own production; and with what humility he offers to allow the printer to "alter any stroke of satire which he might dislike." That any such alteration was made, we do not know. If we did, we could not but feel an indignant regret; but how painful is it to see that a writer of such vigorous powers of mind was actually in such distress, that the small profit which so short a poem, however excellent, could yield, was courted as a "relief."

It has been generally said, I know not with what truth, that Johnson offered his "London" to several

[1] [The publishing season was then in October, when the fashionable world were returning to the metropolis for the winter.—D'ISRAELI.]

booksellers, none of whom would purchase it. To this circumstance Mr. Derrick alludes in the following lines of his "Fortune, a Rhapsody:"

> "Will no kind patron Johnson own?
> Shall Johnson friendless range the town?
> And every publisher refuse
> The offspring of his happy Muse?"

But we have seen that the worthy, modest, and ingenious Mr. Robert Dodsley, had taste enough to perceive its uncommon merit, and thought it creditable to have a share in it. The fact is, that, at a future conference, he bargained for the whole property of it, for which he gave Johnson ten guineas; who told me, "I might perhaps have accepted of less; but that Paul Whitehead had a little before got ten guineas for a poem; and I would not take less than Paul Whitehead[1]."

I may here observe, that Johnson appeared to me to undervalue Paul Whitehead upon every occasion when he was mentioned, and, in my opinion, did not do him justice; but when it is considered that Paul Whitehead was a member of a riotous and profane club, we may account for Johnson's having a prejudice against him. Paul Whitehead was, indeed, unfortunate in being not only slighted by Johnson, but violently attacked by Churchill, who utters the following imprecation:

> "May I (can worse disgrace on manhood fall?)
> Be born a Whitehead, and baptized a Paul!"

yet I shall never be persuaded to think meanly of the authour of so brilliant and pointed a satire as "MANNERS."

[1] [The reader will have observed that in his letter to Cave, Johnson, so far from insisting on ten guineas, or any other price, humbly desires to consult him as to what he ought to ask.—ED.]

Johnson's London was published in May, 1738[1]; and it is remarkable, that it came out on the same morning with Pope's satire, entitled, "1738;" so that England had at once its Juvenal and Horace as poetical monitors. The Reverend Dr. Douglas[2], now Bishop of Salisbury, to whom I am indebted for some obliging communications, was then a student at Oxford, and remembers well the effect which "London" produced. Every body was delighted with it; and

[1] Sir John Hawkins, p. 86, tells us, "The event (Savage's retirement) is *antedated*, in the poem of 'London;' but in every particular, except the difference of a year, what is there said of the departure of Thales, must be understood of Savage, and looked upon as *true history*." This conjecture is, I believe, entirely groundless. I have been assured that Johnson said he was not so much as acquainted with Savage, when he wrote his "London." If the departure mentioned in it was the departure of Savage, the event was not *antedated* but *foreseen*; for "London" was published in May, 1738, and Savage did not set out for Wales till July, 1739. However well Johnson could defend the credibility of *second sight*, he did not pretend that he himself was possessed of that faculty.—BOSWELL.

[Notwithstanding Mr. Boswell's proofs, and Dr. Johnson's own assertion, the identity of Savage and Thales has been repeated by all the biographers, and has obtained general vogue. It may, therefore, be worth while to add, that Johnson's residence at Greenwich (which, as it was the scene of his *fancied* parting from Thales, is currently taken to have been that of his *real* separation from Savage) occurred two years before the latter event: and at that time it does not appear that Johnson was so much as acquainted with Savage, or even with Cave, at whose house he first met Savage:—again; Johnson distinctly tells us, in his Life of Savage, that the latter took his departure for Wales, not by embarking at Greenwich, but by the Bristol stage coach: and, finally and *decisively*, Johnson, if Thales had been Savage, could never have admitted into his poem two lines which seem to point so forcibly at the drunken fray when Savage stabbed *a* Mr. Sinclair, for which he was convicted of *murder*.

> "Some frolic *drunkard*, reeling from a feast,
> *Provokes* a broil, and *stabs* you in a jest."

There is, certainly, a curious coincidence between some points of the characters of Thales and Savage; but it seems equally certain that the coincidence was fortuitous. Mr. Murphy endeavours to reconcile the difficulties by supposing that Savage's retirement was in contemplation eighteen months before it was carried into effect; but even if this were true (which may well be doubted), it would not alter the *facts*, that *London* was written before Johnson knew Savage; and that one of the severest strokes in the satire touched Savage's sorest point. —ED.]

[2] [He was a Scotchman by birth, but educated at St. Mary Hall and Balliol College, Oxford, (M. A. 1743, D. D. 1758), and owed his first promotions to Lord Bath (to whose son he had been tutor), and his literary reputation to his detection of Lauder. He wrote several political and party pamphlets, and prepared Captain Cook's third journal for publication. But his most valuable work is *The Criterion*, a refutation of the objections of Hume and others to the miracles recorded in the New Testament. He was made Bishop of Carlisle in 1788, and translated to Salisbury in 1791, in which see he died in 1807.—ED.]

there being no name to it, the first buzz of the literary circles was, "Here is an unknown poet, greater even than Pope." And it is recorded in the Gentleman's Magazine of that year (p. 269), that it "got to the second edition in the course of a week."

One of the warmest patrons of this poem on its first appearance was General Oglethorpe[1], whose "strong benevolence of soul" was unabated during the course of a very long life; though it is painful

[1] [James Edward Oglethorpe, born in 1698, admitted of C. C. C. Oxford in 1714; but he soon after entered the army, and served under Prince Eugene against the Turks. Dr. Warton, (who calls Oglethorpe "a *great hero* and a *great legislator*,") informs us that "neither he (Oglethorpe!) nor Prince Eugene loved Marlborough;" and that Oglethorpe related that Eugene said, sneeringly, of his illustrious colleague, "there is a great difference between making war *en maitre* or *en avocat*." The fame of the Duke of Marlborough will not be much impaired by wanting the *love* of Oglethorpe, who did not leave school till after that great man had terminated his public career; and even Oglethorpe's authority would not induce us to believe that Prince Eugene (supposing him to have wished to depreciate Marlborough) would have talked such absurd nonsense as that above quoted. Oglethorpe's activity in settling the colony of Georgia obtained for him the immortality of Pope's celebrated panegyrick quoted in the text:

"One, driven by strong benevolence of soul,
Shall fly like Oglethorpe from pole to pole."

In 1745 Oglethorpe was promoted to the rank of major-general, and had a command during the Scotch rebellion. His corps, consisting of light cavalry, was the van of the Duke of Cumberland's army, and was ordered to press on the rear of the rebels when retreating through Westmoreland. Oglethorpe, arriving in front of a little village called Shap, (where the enemy's rear was supposed to be,) just before nightfall, in very bad weather, held a consultation with his officers, in which it was decided, that the lateness of the hour, and the exhaustion of the troops, rendered it inexpedient to attack that night; and Oglethorpe therefore marched off to a neighbouring village to forage and refresh. Meanwhile, the Duke of Cumberland pressed on; and next morning, when he came to Shap, found that it had been abandoned by the rebels, but H. R. H. was surprised by seeing, on his right towards the rear, an unexpected body of troops; it turned out to be Oglethorpe's corps, which, from being the *van* guard of his army, had thus unaccountably become the *rear*. The duke caused Oglethorpe to be brought to a court martial (from the original minutes of which the for going particulars are taken), and though acquitted, he was never again employed. It is by no means surprising that this "*neglect*" should have mortified a man of Oglethorpe's sensibility; and it is to be inferred from Mr. Boswell's expressions, that late in life he had in vain solicited for some "*mark of distinction*" to heal his wounded feelings. General Oglethorpe sat in five or six parliaments, and was in general politics a tory, and even suspected of being a jacobite: to this may, perhaps, be referred most of the particulars of his history – his dislike of the Duke of Marlborough—the praises of Pope—his partiality towards Johnson's political poetry—the suspicion of not having done his best against the rebels—and the "neglect" of the court. He died 30th June, 1785.—Ed.]

to think, that he had but too much reason to become cold and callous, and discontented with the world, from the neglect which he experienced of his publick and private worth, by those in whose power it was to gratify so gallant a veteran with marks of distinction. This extraordinary person was as remarkable for his learning and taste, as for his other eminent qualities; and no man was more prompt, active, and generous, in encouraging merit. I have heard Johnson gratefully acknowledge, in his presence, the kind and effectual support which he gave to his "London," though unacquainted with its authour.

Pope, who then filled the poetical throne without a rival, it may reasonably be presumed, must have been particularly struck by the sudden appearance of such a poet; and, to his credit, let it be remembered, that his feelings and conduct on the occasion were candid and liberal. He requested Mr. Richardson[1], son of the painter, to endeavour to find out who this new authour was. Mr. Richardson, after some inquiry, having informed him that he had discovered only that his name was Johnson, and that he was some obscure man, Pope said, "He will soon be *deterré*[2]." We shall presently see, from a note written by Pope, that he was himself afterwards more successful in his inquiries than his friend.

That in this justly celebrated poem may be found a few rhymes which the critical precision of English

[1] [There were three Richardsons known at this period in the literary world: 1st. Jonathan Richardson the elder, usually called the Painter, though he was an author as well as a painter; he died in 1745, aged 80. 2d. Jonathan the younger, who is the person mentioned in the text, who also painted, though not as a profession, and who published several works; he died in 1771, aged 77. 3d. Samuel Richardson, the authour of the celebrated novels. He was by trade a printer, and had the good sense to continue, during the height of his fame, his attention to his business. He died in 1761, aged 72.—ED.]

[2] Sir Joshua Reynolds, from the information of the younger Richardson.—BOSWELL.

prosody at this day would disallow, cannot be denied; but with this small imperfection, which in the general blaze of its excellence is not perceived, till the mind has subsided into cool attention, it is, undoubtedly, one of the noblest productions in our language both for sentiment and expression. The nation was then in that ferment against the court and the ministry, which some years after ended in the downfall of Sir Robert Walpole; and as it has been said, that tories are whigs when out of place; and whigs tories when in place; so, as a whig administration ruled with what force it could, a tory opposition had all the animation and all the eloquence of resistance to power, aided by the common topicks of patriotism, liberty, and independence! Accordingly, we find in Johnson's "London" the most spirited invectives against tyranny and oppression, the warmest predilection for his own country, and the purest love of virtue; interspersed with traits of his own particular character and situation, not omitting his prejudices as a "true-born Englishman[1]," not only against foreign countries, but against Ireland and Scotland. On some of these topicks I shall quote a few passages:

> "The cheated nation's happy fav'rites see;
> Mark whom the great caress, who frown on me."

> "Has heaven reserv'd, in pity to the poor,
> No pathless waste, or undiscover'd shore?
> No secret island in the boundless main?
> No peaceful desert yet unclaim'd by Spain?
> Quick let us rise, the happy seats explore,
> And bear Oppression's insolence no more."

[1] It is, however, remarkable, that he uses the epithet, which undoubtedly, since the union between England and Scotland, ought to denominate the natives of both parts of our island.

"Was early taught a BRITON'S rights to prize."—BOSWELL.

[This is not quite correct. The union of the crowns gave the whole island the title of *Great* Britain, but the term *Briton* had been always used in contradistinction to *Caledonian*.—ED.]

23367

"How, when competitors like these contend,
Can *surly Virtue* hope to find a friend?"

"This mournful truth is every where confess'd,
SLOW RISES WORTH, BY POVERTY DEPRESS'D!"

We may easily conceive with what feeling a great mind like his, cramped and galled by narrow circumstances, uttered this last line, which he marked by capitals. The whole of the poem is eminently excellent, and there are in it such proofs of a knowledge of the world, and of a mature acquaintance with life[1], as cannot be contemplated without wonder, when we consider that he was then only in his twenty-ninth year, and had yet been so little in the "busy haunts of men."

Yet, while we admire the poetical excellence of this poem, candour obliges us to allow, that the flame of patriotism and zeal for popular resistance with which it is fraught had no just cause. There was, in truth, *no* "oppression;" the "nation" was *not* "cheated." Sir Robert Walpole was a wise and a benevolent minister, who thought that the happiness and prosperity of a commercial country like ours would be best promoted by peace, which he accordingly maintained with credit, during a very long period. Johnson himself afterwards acknowledged the merit of Walpole, whom he called "a fixed star;" while he characterised his opponent, Pitt, as a "meteor." But Johnson's juvenile poem was naturally impregnated

[1] [What follows will show that Boswell himself was of opinion that London was dictated rather by youthful *feeling*, inflamed by the political frenzy of the times, than by any "knowledge of the world," or any "mature acquaintance with life." Nor is it the least remarkable of the inconsistencies between Johnson's early precepts and subsequent practice, that he, who was in all his latter age the most constant and enthusiastic admirer of London, should have begun life with this vigorous and bitter invective against it. The truth is, he was now writing for bread, cared comparatively little about the real merits or defects of the minister or the metropolis, and only thought how best to make his poem sell.—ED.]

with the fire of opposition, and upon every account was universally admired.

Though thus elevated into fame, and conscious of uncommon powers, he had not that bustling confidence, or I may rather say, that animated ambition, which one might have supposed would have urged him to endeavour at rising in life. But such was his inflexible dignity of character, that he could not stoop to court the great; without which, hardly any man has made his way to a high station[1]. He could not expect to produce many such works as his "London," and he felt the hardships of writing for bread; he was therefore willing to resume the office of a schoolmaster, so as to have a sure, though moderate income for his life; and an offer being made to him of the mastership of a school[2] [at Appleby, in Leicestershire,] provided he could obtain the degree of Master of Arts, Dr. Adams was applied to, by a common friend, to know whether that could be granted him as a favour from the university of Oxford. But though he had made such a figure in the literary world, it was then thought too great a favour to be asked. Hawk. p. 62.

Pope, without any knowledge of him but from his

[1] [This seems to be an erroneous and mischievous assertion. If Mr. Boswell, by *stooping to court the great*, means *base flatteries* and *unworthy compliances*, then it may be safely asserted that such arts, (whatever small successes they may have had), are not those by which men have risen to *high stations*. Look at the instances of elevation to be found in Mr. Boswell's own work—Lord Chatham, Lord Mansfield, Mr. Burke, Mr. Hamilton, Lord Loughborough, Lord Thurlow, Lord Stowell, and so many dignitaries of the law and the church, in whose society Dr. Johnson passed his later days—with what can *they* be charged which would have disgraced Johnson? Boswell, it may be suspected, wrote this under some little personal disappointment in his own courtship of the great, which he more than once hints at. Johnson's opinions on this point will be found under Feb. 1766, and Sept. 1777. —Ed.]

[2] [Mr. Boswell had here inserted a long note to prove, first, that the school in question was Newport in Shropshire; and secondly, on the evidence of a writer in the Gentleman's Magazine (May, 1793), that it was Appleby in Leicestershire, though Mr. Pope, by mistake, had said Shropshire; but as Sir J. Hawkins had already stated Appleby to be the school in question, Mr. Boswell took a great deal of unnecessary trouble, and his note is therefore omitted.—Ed.]

"London," recommended[1] him to Earl Gower, who endeavoured to procure for him a degree from Dublin, by the following letter to a friend of Dean Swift:

"SIR,—Mr. Samuel Johnson (authour of LONDON, a satire, and some other poetical pieces) is a native of this country, and much respected by some worthy gentlemen in this neighbourhood, who are trustees of a charity-school now vacant; the certain salary is sixty pounds a year, of which they are desirous to make him master; but, unfortunately, he is not capable of receiving their bounty, which *would make him happy for life*, by not being *a master of arts*; which, by the statutes of this school, the master of it must be.

"Now these gentlemen do me the honour to think that I have interest enough in you, to prevail upon you to write to Dean Swift, to persuade the university of Dublin to send a diploma to me, constituting this poor man master of arts in their university. They highly extol the man's learning and probity; and will not be persuaded, that the university will make any difficulty of conferring such a favour upon a stranger, if he is recommended by the dean. They say, he is not afraid of the strictest examination, though he is of so long a journey; and will venture it, if the dean thinks it necessary; choosing rather to die upon the road, *than be starved to death in translating for booksellers*; which has been his only subsistence for some time past.

"I fear there is more difficulty in this affair than those good-natured gentlemen apprehend; especially as their election cannot be delayed longer than the 11th of next month. If you see this matter in the same light that it appears to me, I hope you will burn this, and pardon me for giving you so much trouble about an impracticable thing; but, if you think there is a probability of obtaining the favour asked, I am sure your humanity and

[1] [It seems not easy to reconcile Lord Gower's and Pope's letters, and Mr. Boswell's account of this transaction. Lord Gower's letter says that it is written at the request of some *Staffordshire neighbours*. Nothing more natural. He does not even allude to Pope; and, certainly it would have been most extraordinary that Pope, the dearest friend of Swift, should solicit Lord Gower to ask a favour of the Dean. Pope says (see *post*, p. 115.) that he wrote unsolicited to Lord Gower in Johnson's favour; but did not succeed. He makes no allusion to Swift, or the master's degree. Perhaps Pope's application to Lord Gower related, as his letter says, to a school in *Shropshire*, and, failing there, the school of Appleby was thought of afterwards. This supposition would remove all difficulties.—ED.]

propensity to relieve merit in distress will incline you to serve the poor man, without my adding any more to the trouble I have already given you, than assuring you that I am, with great truth, sir, your faithful servant, "GOWER.

"Trentham, Aug. 1, 1739."

It was, perhaps, no small disappointment[1] to Johnson that this respectable application had not the desired effect; yet how much reason has there been, both for himself and his country, to rejoice that it did not succeed, as he might probably have wasted in obscurity those hours in which he afterwards produced his incomparable works.

About this time he made one other effort to emancipate himself from the drudgery of authorship. He applied to Dr. Adams, to consult Dr. Smalbroke[2] of the Commons, whether a person might be permitted to practise as an advocate there, without a doctor's degree in civil law. "I am (said he) a total stranger to these studies; but whatever is a profession, and maintains numbers, must be within the reach of common abilities, and some degree of industry." Dr. Adams was much pleased with Johnson's design to employ his talents in that manner, being confident he would have attained to great eminence. And,

[1] [We shall hereafter see strong instances of Johnson's dislike both of Lord Gower and Dean Swift; and, considering how Johnson was influenced by personal prejudices, it seems not unreasonable to suppose, that this *disappointment* had soured him against both Swift and Lord Gower. It does not appear that Johnson ever saw his lordship's letter; nor, if he had, would he be much pleased at the terms in which he is mentioned. As to Swift, his mind was certainly, at this time, in no condition to exert itself on any remote object; and if his friends ventured to mention the subject to him, it is likely the Dean gave a peevish answer, particularly as he happened to be at this period on very bad terms with the heads of the university. Johnson probably knew no more than that an *unsuccessful* application on his behalf had been made both to Lord Gower and to Dean Swift, and resented the failure without being very scrupulous in apportioning the blame.—ED.]

[2] [Richard Smalbroke, L.L. D., second son of Bishop Smalbroke, succeeded his brother Thomas as chancellor of the diocese of Lichfield in 1778, and died the senior member of the College of Advocates. The long connexion of the Smalbroke family with Lichfield, probably pointed him out to Johnson as a person able and willing to advise him.—ED.]

indeed, I cannot conceive a man better qualified to make a distinguished figure as a lawyer; for he would have brought to his profession a rich store of various knowledge, an uncommon acuteness, and a command of language, in which few could have equalled, and none have surpassed him. He who could display eloquence and wit in defence of the decision of the House of Commons upon Mr. Wilkes's election for Middlesex, and of the unconstitutional taxation of our fellow-subjects in America, must have been a powerful advocate in any cause. But here, also, the want of a degree was an insurmountable bar.

He was, therefore, under the necessity of persevering in that course into which he had been forced; and we find that his proposal from Greenwich to Mr. Cave, for a translation of Father Paul Sarpi's History, was accepted[1].

Some sheets of this translation were printed off, but the design was dropt; for it happened, oddly enough, that another person of the name of Samuel Johnson, librarian of St. Martin's in the Fields, and curate of that parish, engaged in the same undertaking, and was patronised by the clergy, particularly

[1] In the Weekly Miscellany, October 21, 1738, there appeared the following advertisement: "Just published, Proposals for printing the History of the Council of Trent, translated from the Italian of Father Paul Sarpi; with the Authour's Life, and Notes theological, historical, and critical, from the French edition of Dr. Le Courayer. To which are added, Observations on the History, and Notes and Illustrations from various Authours, both printed and manuscript. By S. Johnson. 1. The work will consist of two hundred sheets, and be two volumes in quarto, printed on good paper and letter. 2. The price will be 18*s.* each volume, to be paid, half a guinea at the delivery of the first volume, and the rest at the delivery of the second volume in sheets. 3. Twopence to be abated for every sheet less than two hundred. It may be had on a large paper, in three volumes, at the price of three guineas; one to be paid at the time of subscribing, another at the delivery of the first, and the rest at the delivery of the other volumes. The work is now in the press, and will be diligently prosecuted. Subscriptions are taken in by Mr. Dodsley in Pall-Mall, Mr. Rivington in St. Paul's Church-yard, by E. Cave at St. John's Gate, and the Translator, at No. 6, in Castle-street, by Cavendish-square."—BOSWELL.

by Dr. Pearce, afterwards Bishop of Rochester. Several light skirmishes passed between the rival translators, in the newspapers of the day; and the consequence was that they destroyed each other, for neither of them went on with the work. It is much to be regretted, that the able performance of that celebrated genius FRA PAOLO lost the advantage of being incorporated into British literature by the masterly hand of Johnson.

I have in my possession, by the favour of Mr. John Nichols, a paper in Johnson's hand-writing, entitled "Account between Mr. Edward Cave and Sam. Johnson, in relation to a version of Father Paul, &c. begun August the 2d, 1738;" by which it appears, that from that day to the 21st of April, 1739, Johnson received for this work 49*l.* 7*s.* in sums of one, two, three, and sometimes four guineas at a time, most frequently two. And it is curious to observe the minute and scrupulous accuracy with which Johnson had pasted upon it a slip of paper, which he has entitled "Small account," and which contains one article, "Sept. 9th, Mr. Cave laid down 2*s.* 6*d.*[1]" There is subjoined to this account, a list of some subscribers to the work, partly in Johnson's hand-writing, partly in that of another person; and there follows a leaf or two on which are written a number of characters which have the appearance of a short hand, which, perhaps, Johnson was then trying to learn.

"TO MR. CAVE.

"Wednesday, [August or Sept. 1738.]

"SIR,—I did not care to detain your servant while I wrote an answer to your letter, in which you seem to insinuate that I had promised more than I am ready to perform. If I have

[1] [Probably a tavern reckoning.—ED.]

raised your expectations by any thing that may have escaped my memory, I am sorry; and if you remind me of it, shall thank you for the favour. If I made fewer alterations than usual in the debates, it was only because there appeared, and still appears to be, less need of alteration. The verses to Lady Firebrace[1] may be had when you please, for you know that such a subject neither deserves much thought, nor requires it.

"The Chinese Stories[2] may be had folded down when you please to send, in which I do not recollect that you desired any alterations to be made.

"An answer to another query I am very willing to write, and had consulted with you about it last night, if there had been time; for I think it the most proper way of inviting such a correspondence as may be an advantage to the paper, not a load upon it.

"As to the Prize Verses, a backwardness to determine their degrees of merit is not peculiar to me. You may, if you please, still have what I can say; but I shall engage with little spirit in an affair, which I shall *hardly* end to my own satisfaction, and *certainly* not to the satisfaction of the parties concerned[3].

"As to Father Paul, I have not yet been just to my proposal, but have met with impediments, which, I hope, are now at an end; and if you find the progress hereafter not such as you have a right to expect, you can easily stimulate a negligent translator.

"If any or all of these have contributed to your discontent, I will endeavour to remove it; and desire you to propose the question to which you wish for an answer.

"I am, sir, your humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

[1] [They afterwards appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine* (for Sept. 1738), with this title: "Verses to Lady F———, at Bury Assizes." It seems quite unintelligible how these six silly lines (at best, only excusable if written *impromptu* on the *occasion*) should be the production of Johnson, and made to the *order* (to use the tradesman's phrase) of Cave. These considerations, and some stupid lines in praise of *Suffolk* beauties in the same volume, lead to a conjecture that Cave may have sent some verses of another correspondent, on Lady Firebrace, to Johnson to correct or curtail. It is next to impossible that they could be originally Johnson's own; and it may also be observed, that Boswell does not afterwards mention them in his list of Johnson's contributions to the magazine.—ED.]

[2] Du Halde's Description of China was then publishing by Mr. Cave in weekly numbers, whence Johnson was to select pieces for the embellishment of the magazine.—NICHOLS.

[3] A premium of forty pounds proposed for the best poem on the divine attributes is here alluded to.—NICHOLS. [See note p. 60, as to a similar premium.—ED.]

"TO MR. CAVE.

[Sept. 1738.]

"SIR,—I am pretty much of your opinion, that the Commentary cannot be prosecuted with any appearance of success; for as the names of the authours concerned are of more weight in the performance than its own intrinsick merit, the publick will be soon satisfied with it. And I think the Examen should be pushed forward with the utmost expedition. Thus, 'This day, &c. An Examen of Mr. Pope's Essay, &c. containing a succinct Account of the Philosophy of Mr. Leibnitz on the System of the Fatalists, with a Confutation of their Opinions, and an Illustration of the Doctrine of Free-will;' (with what else you think proper).

"It will, above all, be necessary to take notice, that it is a thing distinct from the Commentary.

"I was so far from imagining they[1] stood still, that I conceived them to have a good deal beforehand, and therefore was less anxious in providing them more. But if ever they stand still on my account, it must doubtless be charged to me; and whatever else shall be reasonable, I shall not oppose; but beg a suspension of judgement till morning, when I must entreat you to send me a dozen proposals[2], and you shall then have copy to spare. I am, sir, yours, *impransus*, "SAM. JOHNSON.

"Pray muster up the Proposals, if you can, or let the boy recal them from the booksellers."

But although he corresponded with Mr. Cave concerning a translation of Crousaz's Examen of Pope's Essay on Man, and gave advice as one anxious for its success, I was long ago convinced by a perusal of the Preface, that this translation was erroneously ascribed to him; and I have found this point ascertained beyond all doubt, by the following article in Dr. Birch's Manuscripts in the British Museum.

[1] The compositors in Mr. Cave's printing-office, who appear by this letter to have then waited for copy.—NICHOLS.

[2] [These were, no doubt, the *proposals* for the translation of Father Paul; and as Johnson seems to ask for them as affording him a pecuniary resource, they must have been the proposals for the large paper, for which, as we see by the preceding note, (p. 104.) one guinea was payable at the time of subscribing; and it may be concluded that Cave was more ready to make advances to his author in this *paper* than in *cash*.—ED.]

" ELISÆ CARTERÆ, S. P. D. THOMAS BIRCH.

" *Versionem tuam Examinis Crousaziani jam perlegi. Summam styli et elegantiam, et in re difficillimâ proprietatem, admiratus.*

" *Dabam Novemb.* 27°, 1738."

Indeed Mrs. Carter has lately acknowledged to Mr. Seward, that she was the translator of the " Examen[1]."

It is remarkable, that Johnson's last quoted letter to Mr. Cave concludes with a fair confession that he had not a dinner; and it is no less remarkable, that though in this state of want himself, his benevolent heart was not insensible to the necessities of an humble labourer in literature, as appears from the very next letter.

" TO MR. CAVE.

[*No date.*]

" DEAR SIR,—You may remember I have formerly talked with you about a Military Dictionary. The eldest Mr. Macbean, who was with Mr. Chambers, has very good materials for such a work, which I have seen, and will do it at a very low rate[2]. I think the terms of war and navigation might be comprised, with good explanations, in one 8vo. pica, which he is willing to do for twelve shillings a sheet, to be made up a guinea at the second impression. If you think on it, I will wait on you with him. I am, sir, your humble servant, " SAM. JOHNSON.

" Pray lend me Topsel on Animals."

[1] [There is no doubt that Miss Carter was the translator of the *Examination*, &c., but it is not so certain that Johnson was not himself, at the date of this letter, employed on a similar work, in which he preferred keeping the Latin title of an *Examen*. The work Johnson alludes to, was no doubt to have been printed by *Cave*.—Miss Carter's *was* printed by *A. Dodd*. So that unless Dodd was a *prête-nom* to Cave, it might be inferred that Johnson was employed on a translation which gave way to Miss Carter's; but, as I find in Cave's Magazine for September Miss Carter's *Examination* announced by an anticipatory advertisement (very unusual in that magazine), as " being in the press, and speedily to be published," I conclude, that Dodd was employed by Cave; that the above letter refers to Miss Carter's translation; and that the anticipatory advertisement (though not in the words furnished by Johnson) was published in pursuance of the suggestion in his letter to Cave.—ED.]

[2] This book was published.

I must not omit to mention, that this Mr. Macbean was a native of Scotland[1].

In the Gentleman's Magazine of this year, Johnson gave a Life of Father Paul * (p. 583); and he wrote the Preface to the Volume †, which, though prefixed to it when bound, is always published with the Appendix, and is therefore the last composition belonging to it. The ability and nice adaptation with which he could draw up a prefatory address, was one of his peculiar excellencies.

It appears too, that he paid a friendly attention to Mrs. Elizabeth Carter: [and besides the interest which it seems probable that he took in her translation of the Examen,] I find, in a letter from Mr. Cave to Dr. Birch, November 28, this year, ED.

"Mr. Johnson advises Miss C. to undertake a translation of *Boethius de Cons.* because there is prose and verse, and to put her name to it when published."

This advice was not followed: probably from an apprehension that the work was not sufficiently popular for an extensive sale. How well Johnson himself could have executed a translation of this philosophic poet, we may judge from the following specimen which he has given in the Rambler: (*Motto to No.* 7.)

"O qui perpetuâ mundum ratione gubernas,
Terrarum cœlique sator!——————
Disjice terrenæ nebulas et pondera molis,
Atque tuo splendore mica! Tu namque serenum,
Tu requies tranquilla piis. Te cernere finis,
Principium, vector, dux, semita, terminus, idem."

"O THOU whose power o'er moving worlds presides,
Whose voice created, and whose wisdom guides,
On darkling man in pure effulgence shine,
And cheer the clouded mind with light divine.
'Tis thine alone to calm the pious breast,
With silent confidence and holy rest;
From thee, great God! we spring, to thee we tend,
Path, motive, guide, original, and end!"

[1] [Mr. Boswell's nationality delights in showing that Johnson's prejudices did not prevent his employing and recommending *Scotchmen*.—ED.]

ED. [He addressed to her, in the Magazine for April, 1738[1], an epigram to Eliza*, both in Greek and Latin (p. 210); and probably, also, the following Latin epigram in that for July (p. 372):

"Elysios Popi dum ludit læta per hortos,
En avida lauros carpit Elisa manu.
Nil opus furto. Lauros tibi, dulcis Elisa,
Si neget optata Popus, Apollo dabit."

This year's Magazine also contains the celebrated Latin epigram "To a Lady (Miss Maria Aston) who spoke in Defence of Liberty" (p. 211); and a Greek epigram to "Doctor Birch" (p. 654).]

In 1739, besides the assistance which he gave to the Parliamentary Debates, his writings in the Gentleman's Magazine were, "The Life of Boerhaave*" (p. 37), in which it is to be observed, that he discovers that love of chymistry which never forsook him; "An Appeal to the Publick in behalf of the Editor†" (p. 111); "An Address to the Reader†" (p. 223);

ED. "English verses to Eliza *[2];" [and probably[3] the following Latin Epigram to Dr. Birch* (p. 2):

[1] [It seems extraordinary that Mr. Boswell, with all his research and accuracy, should have stated that the epigrams to *Eliza* and *Dr. Birch* are to be found in the volume for 1739, instead of that for 1738, and should have omitted the acknowledged epigram on *Maria*, and not even noticed the epigram on *Eliza* gathering laurels in Pope's garden, which there is every reason for supposing to be his. Johnson might even have accompanied his young friend to visit Pope's villa, and been a witness to the incident.—ED.]

[2] [I have permitted this statement to remain in the text, though I can find in the Magazine for 1739 but one copy of English verses to *Eliza*. They are in December, and signed *Amasius*, which is the signature of some other pieces now known to have been written by *Collins*; but as Boswell erroneously attributed the Greek and Latin verses to Eliza to this year, the English verses may, like the others, have belonged to 1738; though even in that volume I can find nothing addressed to Eliza in English which could be Johnson's, except a translation of his own (as I conceive) Latin epigram on the gathering Pope's laurels. It is not easy to account for the inaccuracy with which Mr. Boswell confounds these two years.—ED.]

[3] [My chief reasons for supposing this Latin epigram to be Johnson's are, that it is a version of his own acknowledged Greek epigram which appeared in the preceding Magazine, and that he had followed his Greek epigram on *Eliza* with a Latin paraphrase in the same style as this.—ED.]

" In Birchium.

Arte novâ rarâque fide perscripserat ausus
Birchius egregios claraque gesta virum.
Hunc oculis veri Fautrix lustravit acutis,
Et placido tandem hæc edidit ore, Dea:
' Perge modo, atque tuas olim post funera laudes
Qui scribat meritas Birchius alter erit.' "]

It has been erroneously supposed, that an Essay published in that Magazine this year, entitled " The Apotheosis of Milton," was written by Johnson; and on that supposition it has been improperly inserted in the edition of his works by the booksellers, after his decease. Were there no positive testimony as to this point, the style of the performance, and the name of Shakspeare not being mentioned in an Essay professedly reviewing the principal English poets, would ascertain it not to be the production of Johnson. But there is here no occasion to resort to internal evidence; for my Lord Bishop of Salisbury (Dr. Douglas) has assured me that it was written by Guthrie. He also published, separately, " A Complete Vindication of the Licensers of the Stage, from the malicious and scandalous Aspersions of Mr. Brooke, Authour of Gustavus Vasa *;" being an ironical attack upon them for their suppression of that tragedy. [This interposition of legal authority was looked upon by Mr. Brooke's friends, in which number were included all the Jacobites in the kingdom, as an infraction of a natural right, and as affecting the cause of liberty. To express their resentment of this injury, they advised him to send it to the press[1], and by a subscription to the publication, of near a thousand persons, encouraged others to the like attempts. Upon occasion Hawk. p. 76.

[1] [Mr. Brooke appears to have circulated MS. copies of Gustavus Vasa before it was completed.—I have one of these presentation copies.—D'Israeli.]

Hawk. p. 79. of this publication, Johnson was employed by one Corbet, a bookseller of small note, to take up the cause of this injured authour, and he did it in this pamphlet. In the course of this mock vindication of power, Johnson has taken a wide scope, and adopted all the vulgar topicks of complaint.]

He also published "Marmor Norfolciense; or an Essay on an ancient prophetical Inscription, in monkish Rhyme, lately discovered near Lynne, in Norfolk, by Probus Britannicus*." In this latter performance, he, in a feigned inscription, supposed to have been found in Norfolk, the county of Sir Robert Walpole, then the obnoxious prime minister of this country, inveighs against the Brunswick succession, and the measures of government consequent upon it. To this supposed prophecy he added a Commentary, making each expression apply to the times, with warm Anti-Hanoverian zeal.

This anonymous pamphlet, I believe, did not make so much noise as was expected, and, therefore, had not a very extensive circulation. Sir John Hawkins relates that "warrants were issued, and messengers employed to apprehend the authour; who, though he had forborne to subscribe his name to the pamphlet, the vigilance of those in pursuit of him had discovered;" and we are informed that he lay concealed in Lambeth-marsh till the scent after him grew cold. This, however, is altogether without foundation, for Mr. Steele, one of the secretaries of the treasury, who, amidst a variety of important business, politely obliged me with his attention to my inquiry, informed me that "he directed every possible search to be made in the records of the treasury and secretary of state's office, but could find no trace whatever of any warrant having been issued to apprehend the authour of this pamphlet."

"Marmor Norfolciense" became exceedingly scarce, so that I for many years endeavoured in vain to procure a copy of it. At last I was indebted to the malice of one of Johnson's numerous petty adversaries, who, in 1775, published a new edition of it, "with Notes and a Dedication to Samuel Johnson, LL.D. by Tribunus;" in which some puny scribbler invidiously attempted to found upon it a charge of inconsistency against its authour, because he had accepted of a pension from his present majesty, and had written in support of the measures of government. As a mortification to such impotent malice, of which there are so many instances towards men of eminence, I am happy to relate, that this *telum imbelle* did not reach its exalted object till about a year after it thus appeared, when I mentioned it to him, supposing that he knew of the re-publication. To my surprise he had not yet heard of it. He requested me to go directly and get it for him, which I did. He looked at it and laughed, and seemed to be much diverted with the feeble efforts of his unknown adversary, who, I hope, is alive to read this account. "Now (said he) here is somebody who thinks he has vexed me sadly: yet if it had not been for you, you rogue, I should probably never have seen it."

[These two satirical pamphlets were, Sir J. Hawkins thinks, in some degree prompted by the principle which Johnson frequently declared to be the only true genuine motive to writing, namely, pecuniary profit. This principle was not only avowed by Johnson, but seems to have been wrought by him into a habit. He was never greedy of money, but without money could not be stimulated to write. Hawk. p. 84, 85.

Yet was he not so indifferent to the subjects that he was requested to write on, as at any time to abandon

either his religious or political principles. He would no more have put his name to an Arian or Socinian tract than to a defence of Atheism. At the time when "Faction Detected" came out, a pamphlet of which the late Lord Egmont is now generally understood to have been the authour, Osborne, the bookseller, held out to him a strong temptation to answer it, which he refused, being convinced, as he assured Sir J. Hawkins, that the charge contained in it was made good, and that the argument grounded thereon was unanswerable.

Hawk. p 80,81. The truth is, that Johnson's political prejudices were a mist that the eye of his judgement could not penetrate: in all the measures of Walpole's government he could see nothing right; nor could he be convinced, in his invectives against a standing army, as the Jacobites affected to call it, that the peasantry of a country was not an adequate defence against an invasion of it by an armed force. He almost asserted in terms, that the succession to the crown had been illegally interrupted, and that from whig-politicks none of the benefits of government could be expected. From hence it appears, and to his honour be it said, that his principles co-operated with his necessities, and that *prostitution* of his talents could not, in justice, be imputed to him.]

As Mr. Pope's note concerning Johnson, alluded to in a former page, refers both to his "London," and his "Marmor Norfolciense," I have deferred inserting it till now. I am indebted for it to Dr. Percy, the bishop of Dromore, who permitted me to copy it from the original in his possession. It was presented to his lordship by Sir Joshua Reynolds, to whom it was given by the son of Mr. Richardson the painter, the person to whom it is addressed. I have transcribed

it with minute exactness, that the peculiar mode of writing, and imperfect spelling of that celebrated poet, may be exhibited to the curious in literature. It justifies Swift's epithet of "paper-sparing Pope," for it is written on a slip no larger than a common message-card, and was sent to Mr. Richardson, along with the imitation of Juvenal.

"This is imitated by one Johnson who put in for a Publick-school in Shropshire[1], but was disappointed. He has an infirmity of the convulsive kind, that attacks him sometimes, so as to make Him a sad Spectacle[2]. Mr. P. from the Merit of This Work which was all the knowledge he had of Him[3] endeavoured to serve Him without his own application; & wrote to my L^d. gore, but he did not succeed. Mr. Johnson published afterw^ds. another Poem in Latin with Notes the whole very Humerous call'd the Norfolk Prophecy. "P."

Johnson had been told of this note; and Sir Joshua Reynolds informed him of the compliment which it contained, but, from delicacy, avoided showing him the paper itself. When Sir Joshua observed to Johnson that he seemed very desirous to see Pope's note, he answered, "Who would not be proud to have such a man as Pope so solicitous in inquiring about him?"

The infirmity to which Mr. Pope alludes, appeared to me also, as will be hereafter observed, to be of the convulsive kind, and of the nature of that distemper called St. Vitus's dance; and in this opinion I am confirmed by the description which Sydenham gives of that disease. "This disorder is a kind of convulsion. Aug. 1773.

1 [This has been supposed to be an error, as Appleby is in Leicester: but see *ante*, p. 102, where it is suggested that Johnson may have "*put in*" for a school in Shropshire, as well as for the school in Leicestershire.—Ed.]

2 [It is clear that, as Johnson advanced in life, these convulsive infirmities, though never entirely absent, were so far subdued that he could not be called a *sad spectacle*. We have seen that he was rejected from two schools on account of these distortions, which in his latter years were certainly not violent enough to excite disgust.—Ed.]

3 [This seems hardly consistent with the story (told *ante*, p. 32.) of Pope's approbation of Johnson's translation of his Messiah.—Ed.]

It manifests itself by halting or unsteadiness of one of the legs, which the patient draws after him like an idiot. If the hand of the same side be applied to the breast, or any other part of the body, he cannot keep it a moment in the same posture, but it will be drawn into a different one by a convulsion, notwithstanding all his efforts to the contrary." Sir Joshua Reynolds, however, was of a different opinion, and favoured me with the following paper:

"Those motions or tricks of Dr. Johnson are improperly called convulsions. He could sit motionless when he was told so to do, as well as any other man. My opinion is, that it proceeded from a habit[1] which he had indulged himself in, of accompanying his thoughts with certain untoward actions, and those actions always appeared to me as if they were meant to reprobate some part of his past conduct. Whenever he was not engaged in conversation, such thoughts were sure to rush into his mind; and, for this reason, any company, any employment whatever, he preferred to being alone. The great business of his life (he said) was to escape from himself. This disposition he considered as the disease of his mind, which nothing cured but company.

"One instance of his absence of mind and particularity, as it is characteristick of the man, may be worth relating. When he and I took a journey together into the west, we visited the late Mr. Bankes, of Dorsetshire; the conversation turning upon pictures, which Johnson could not well see, he retired to a corner of the room, stretching out his right leg as far as he could reach before him, then bringing up his left leg, and stretching his right still further on. The old gentleman observing him, went up to him, and in a very courteous manner assured him, though it was not a new house, the flooring was perfectly safe. The Doctor started from his reverie, like a person waked out of his sleep, but spoke not a word."

While we are on this subject, my readers may not be displeased with another anecdote, communicated

[1] Sir Joshua Reynolds's notion on this subject is confirmed by what Johnson himself said to a young lady, the niece of his friend Christopher Smart. See a note by Mr. Boswell on some particulars communicated by Reynolds, under March 30, 1783.—MALONE.

to me by the same friend, from the relation of Mr. Hogarth.

Johnson used to be a pretty frequent visitor at the house of Mr. Richardson [1], authour of Clarissa, and other novels of extensive reputation. Mr. Hogarth came one day to see Richardson, soon after the execution of Dr. Cameron, for having taken arms for the house of Stuart in 1745-6; and being a warm partisan of George the Second, he observed to Richardson, that certainly there must have been some very unfavourable circumstances lately discovered in this particular case, which had induced the king to approve of an execution for rebellion so long after the time when it was committed, as this had the appearance of putting a man to death in cold blood [2], and was very unlike his majesty's usual clemency. While he was talking, he perceived a person standing at a window in the room, shaking his head, and rolling himself about in a strange ridiculous manner. He concluded that he was an idiot, whom his relations had put under the care of Mr. Richardson, as a very good man. To his great surprise, however, this figure stalked forwards to where he and Mr. Richardson were sitting, and all at once took up the argument, and burst out into an invective against George the Second, as one who, upon all occasions, was un-

[1] [See *ante*, p. 98.]

[2] Impartial posterity may, perhaps, be as little inclined as Dr. Johnson was to justify the uncommon rigour exercised in the case of Dr. Archibald Cameron. He was an amiable and truly honest man; and his offence was owing to a generous, though mistaken principle of duty. Being obliged, after 1746, to give up his profession as a physician, and to go into foreign parts, he was honoured with the rank of colonel, both in the French and Spanish service. He was a son of the ancient and respectable family of Cameron, of Lochiel; and his brother, who was the chief of that brave clan, distinguished himself by moderation and humanity, while the Highland army marched victorious through Scotland. It is remarkable of this chief, that though he had earnestly remonstrated against the attempt as hopeless, he was of too heroick a spirit not to venture his life and fortune in the cause, when personally asked by him whom he thought his prince.—BOSWELL.

relenting and barbarous; mentioning many instances, particularly, that when an officer of high rank had been acquitted by a court-martial, George the Second had with his own hand struck his name off the list[1]. In short, he displayed such a power of eloquence, that Hogarth looked at him with astonishment, and actually imagined that this idiot had been at the moment inspired. Neither Hogarth nor Johnson were made known to each other at this interview.

Piozzi, p. 104-5. [They afterwards, as we learn from Mrs. Piozzi, became better acquainted. "Johnson," she adds, "made four lines on the death of poor Hogarth, which were equally true and pleasing: I know not why Garrick's were preferred to them.

> 'The hand of him here torpid lies,
> That drew the essential form of grace;
> Here clos'd in death the attentive eyes,
> That saw the manners in the face.'"

Mr. Hogarth, among a variety of kindnesses shown to Mrs. Piozzi, was used to be very earnest that she should obtain the acquaintance, and if possible, the friendship, of Dr. Johnson, whose conversation was (he said) to the talk of other men, like Titian's painting compared to Hudson's. Of Dr. Johnson, when that lady's father and Hogarth were talking together about him one day, the latter said, "That man is not contented with believing the Bible, but he fairly resolves, I think, to believe nothing *but* the Bible." Johnson (added he), though so wise a fellow, is more

[1] [Dr. Cameron was executed on the 7th June, 1753. No instance can be traced in the War or Admiralty Offices of any officer of high rank being struck out of the list about that period, after acquittal by a court-martial. It may be surmised that Mr. Hogarth's statement, or Sir Joshua's report of it, was not quite accurate in details, and that Johnson alluded to the case of his friend General Oglethorpe, who, *after acquittal by a court-martial*, was (to use a vulgar but expressive phrase) *put upon the shelf*.—See *ante*, p. 97.—ED.]

like king David than king Solomon; for he says, in his haste, that all men are liars.]

In 1740 he wrote for the Gentleman's Magazine "the Preface †[1];" "the Life of Admiral Blake*" (p. 301); and the first parts of those of "Sir Francis Drake*" (p. 389), and Philip Barretier*"[2] (p. 612); both which he finished the following year. He also wrote an "Essay on Epitaphs*" (p. 593); and an "Epitaph on Philips, a musician*" (p. 464); which was afterwards published, with some other pieces of his, in Mrs. Williams's Miscellanies. This epitaph is so exquisitely beautiful, that I remember even Lord Kames[3], strangely prejudiced as he was against Dr. Johnson, was compelled to allow it very high praise. It has been ascribed to Mr. Garrick, from its appearing at first with the signature G; but I have heard Mr. Garrick declare, that it was written by Dr. Johnson, and give the following account of the manner in which it was composed. Johnson and he were sitting together; when, amongst other things, Garrick repeated an epitaph upon this Philips by a Dr. Wilkes, in these words:

"Exalted soul! whose harmony could please
The love-sick virgin, and the gouty ease:

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[1] [This *Preface* is, in fact, a learned essay "on the Acta Diurna" of the old Romans, and has little of Johnson's manner.—ED.]

[2] [His attention was probably drawn to Barretier by his friend Miss Carter, with whom that ingenious young man corresponded. He died in 1740; and Johnson begins the life in the Magazine of that year by stating that "he had few materials for his work but the letters of Barretier's father," which, probably, were communicated by Miss Carter. In 1742, however, Mr. Barretier, senior, transmitted to that lady a life of his son, printed, as it seems, by his friends; and, in 1742, we find Dr. Johnson re-writing his life, with large additions. Not having seen the foreign life, the Editor cannot say how far Dr. Johnson may have borrowed from it; but if we were to form an opinion of the extent of Barretier's learning, the force of his mind, or the goodness of his taste, from what has been preserved of his correspondence in the life of Miss Carter (p. 70—94), the praises lavished on him by his biographer would appear very extravagant, and the extraordinary accounts given of him seem rather those of parental partiality than of credible history.—ED.]

[3] [Henry Home, one of the Lords of Session in Scotland, author of the *Elements of Criticism*, *Sketches of the History of Man*, and several other less celebrated but valuable works.—ED.]

Could jarring discord, like Amphion, move
To beauteous order and harmonious love;
Rest here in peace, till angels bid thee rise,
And meet thy blessed Saviour in the skies."

Johnson shook his head at these common-place funeral lines, and said to Garrick, "I think, Davy, I can make a better." Then, stirring about his tea for a little while, in a state of meditation, he almost extempore produced the following verses:

"Philips, whose touch harmonious could remove
The pangs of guilty power or hapless love;
Rest here, distress'd by poverty no more,
Here find that calm thou gav'st so oft before;
Sleep undisturb'd, within this peaceful shrine,
Till angels wake thee with a note like thine[1]!"

At the same time that Mr. Garrick favoured me with this anecdote, he repeated a very pointed epigram by Johnson, on George the Second and Colley Cibber, which has never yet appeared, and of which I know not the exact date. Dr. Johnson afterwards gave it to me himself:

"Augustus still survives in Maro's strain,
And Spenser's verse prolongs Eliza's reign;
Great George's acts let tuneful Cibber sing;
For Nature form'd the Poet for the King."

In 1741 he wrote for the Gentleman's Magazine "the Preface †;" "Conclusion of his Lives of Drake* (p. 38) and Barretier** " (p. 87); "a free Translation of the Jests of Hierocles, with an Introduction †" (p. 477); and, I think, the following pieces: "Debate on the Proposal of Parliament to Cromwell, to

[1] The epitaph of Philips is in the porch of Wolverhampton church. Mr. Garrick appears not to have recited the verses correctly; and one of the various readings is remarkable, as it is the germ of Johnson's concluding line,

"And meet thy Saviour's *con* ·t in the skies."—BOSWELL.

[By *consort*, I suppose *concert* is meant; but still I do not see the germ of Johnson's thought. That music may be among the joys of heaven has been sometimes suggested; but that the dead were to be "awakened by *harmonious* notes," seems quite new, and not quite orthodox.—ED.]

assume the Title of King, abridged, modified, and digested[1] †" (p. 94); "Translation of Abbé Guyon's Dissertation on the Amazons †" (p. 202); "Translation of Fontenelle's Panegyrick on Dr. Morin †" (p. 375). Two notes upon this appear to me undoubtedly his. He this year, and the two following, wrote the Parliamentary Debates. He told me himself, that he was the sole composer of them for those three years only. He was not, however, precisely exact in his statement, which he mentioned from hasty recollection; for it is sufficiently evident that his composition of them began November 19, 1740, and ended February 23, 1742-3.

It appears from some of Cave's letters to Dr. Birch, that Cave had better assistance for that branch of his Magazine than has been generally supposed; and that he was indefatigable in getting it made as perfect as he could.

Thus 21st July, 1735,

"I trouble you with the enclosed, because you said you could easily correct what is here given for Lord C——ld's speech. I beg you will do so as soon as you can for me, because the month is far advanced."

And 15th July, 1737,

"As you remember the debates so far as to perceive the speeches already printed are not exact, I beg the favour that you will peruse the enclosed, and, in the best manner your memory will serve, correct the mistaken passages, or add any thing that is omitted. I should be very glad to have something of the Duke of N——le's speech, which would be particularly of service.

"A gentleman has Lord Bathurst's speech to add something to."

And July 3, 1744,

[1] [This is only a reprint, better arranged, of a debate, published in 1660, with a few introductory sentences (which *may* be by Johnson), stating that the editor had reduced the confusion and intricacies of the original report into a more intelligible order.—Ed.]

"You will see what stupid, low, abominable stuff is put[1] upon your noble and learned friend's[2] character, such as I should quite reject, and endeavour to do something better towards doing justice to the character. But as I cannot expect to attain my desire in that respect, it would be a great satisfaction, as well as an honour to our work, to have the favour of the genuine speech. It is a method that several have been pleased to take, as I could show, but I think myself under a restraint. I shall say so far, that I have had some by a third hand, which I understood well enough to come from the first; others by penny-post, and others by the speakers themselves, who have been pleased to visit St. John's-gate, and show particular marks of their being pleased[3]."

There is no reason, I believe, to doubt the veracity of Cave. It is, however, remarkable that none of these letters are in the years during which Johnson alone furnished the Debates, and one of them is in the very year after he ceased from that labour.

Murphy p. 43–5. [That Johnson was the authour of the debates during that period was not generally known; but the secret transpired several years afterwards, and was avowed by himself on the following occasion. Mr. Wedderburne (afterwards Lord Loughborough and Earl of Rosslyn), Dr. Johnson, Dr. Francis (the translator of Horace), Mr. Murphy, who relates the anecdote, and others, dined with the late Mr. Foote. An important debate towards the end of Sir Robert Walpole's administration being mentioned, Dr. Francis observed, "that Mr. Pitt's speech[4] on that occasion was the best he had ever read." He added, "that he had employed eight years of his life in the study of Demosthenes, and finished a translation of that celebrated orator, with all the decorations of style and language within the reach of his capacity; but he had met with nothing equal to the speech above-

I suppose in another compilation of the same kind.—BOSWELL.

[2] Doubtless, Lord Hardwick.—BOSWELL.

[3] Birch's MSS. in the British Museum, 4302.—BOSWELL.

[4] [No doubt that celebrated reply to old Horace Walpole, which begins "The atrocious crime of being a young man," 10th March, 1741.—ED.]

mentioned." Many of the company remembered the debate; and some passages were cited, with the approbation and applause of all present. During the ardour of conversation, Johnson remained silent. As soon as the warmth of praise subsided, he opened with these words: "That speech I wrote in a garret in Exeter-street." The company was struck with astonishment. After staring at each other in silent amaze, Dr. Francis asked "how that speech could be written by him?" "Sir," said Johnson, "I wrote it in Exeter-street [1]. I never had been in the gallery of the House of Commons but once. Cave had interest with the door-keepers. He, and the persons employed under him, gained admittance: they brought away the subject of discussion, the names of the speakers, the sides they took, and the order in which they rose, together with notes of the arguments advanced in the course of the debate. The whole was afterwards communicated to me, and I composed the speeches in the form which they now have in the parliamentary debates." To this discovery Dr. Francis made answer: "Then, sir, you have exceeded Demosthenes himself; for to say that you have exceeded Francis's Demosthenes, would be saying nothing." The rest of the company bestowed lavish encomiums on Johnson: one, in particular, praised his impartiality; observing that he dealt out reason and eloquence with an equal hand to both parties. "That is not quite true," said Johnson; "I saved appearances tolerably well, but I took care that the WHIG DOGS should not have the best of it."] Murphy p. 43–5.

[In the perusal of these debates, we cannot but Hawk. p. 122–129.

[1] [There is here some inaccuracy; the debate in question was written in 1741. In Mr. Boswell's list of Johnson's residences, he appears not to have resided in Exeter-street after his return to London, in 1737.—ED.]

Hawk. p. 122–129.

wonder at the powers that produced them. The authour had never passed those gradations that lead to the knowledge of men and business: born to a narrow fortune, of no profession, conversant chiefly with books, unacquainted with the style of any other than academical disputation, and so great a stranger to senatorial manners, that he never was within the walls of either house of parliament. That a man, under these disadvantages, should be able to frame a system of debate, to compose speeches of such excellence, both in matter[1] and form, as scarcely to be equalled by those of the most able and experienced statesmen, is, I say, matter of astonishment, and a proof of talents that qualified him for a speaker in the most august assembly on earth.

Cave, who had no idea of the powers of eloquence over the human mind, became sensible of its effects in the profits it brought him: he had long thought that the success of his Magazine proceeded from those parts of it that were conducted by himself, which were the abridgement of weekly papers written against the ministry, such as the Craftsman, Fog's Journal, Common Sense, the Weekly Miscellany, the Westminster Journal, and others, and also marshalling the pastorals, the elegies, and the songs, the epigrams, and the rebuses that were sent him by various correspondents, and was scarcely able to see the causes that at this time increased the sale of his pamphlet from ten to fifteen thousand copies a month. But if he saw not, he felt them, and manifested his good fortune by buying an old coach and a pair of older horses; and, that he might avoid the suspicion of pride in setting up an equipage, he displayed to

[1] [With the *matter* he was supplied, though probably imperfectly.—ED.]

the world the source of his affluence, by a representation of St. John's Gate, instead of his arms, on the door-panel. This he himself told Sir J. Hawkins was the reason of distinguishing his carriage from others, by what some might think a whimsical device, and also for causing it to be engraven on all his plate. Hawk. p. 122–129.

Johnson had his reward, over and above the pecuniary recompense vouchsafed him by Cave, in the general applause of his labours, which the increased demand for the Magazine implied[1]; but this, as his performances fell short of his powers, gratified him but little; on the contrary, he disapproved the deceit he was compelled to practise; his notions of morality were so strict, that he would scarcely allow the violation of truth in the most trivial instances, and saw, in falsehood of all kinds, a turpitude that he could never be thoroughly reconciled to; and though the fraud was perhaps not greater than the fictitious relations in Sir Thomas More's Utopia, Lord Bacon's Nova Atlantis, and Bishop Hall's Mundus alter et idem, Johnson was not easy till he had disclosed the deception.

In the mean time it was curious to observe how the deceit operated. It has above been remarked, that Johnson had the art to give different colours to the several speeches, so that some appear to be declamatory and energetic, resembling the orations of Demosthenes; others like those of Cicero, calm, persuasive; others, more particularly those attributed to such country gentlemen, merchants, and seamen as had seats in parliament, bear the characteristic of

[1] [Sir J. Hawkins seems (as well as the other biographers) to have overrated the value, to Cave and the public, of Johnson's Parliamentary Debates. It is shown in the preface to the Parliamentary History for 1378 (ed. 1812), that one of Cave's rivals, the *London Magazine*, often excelled the *Gentleman's Magazine*, in the priority and accuracy of its parliamentary reports, which were contributed by Gordon, the translator of Tacitus.—ED.]

Hawk. p. 122–129.

plainness, bluntness, and an affected honesty as opposed to the plausibility of such as were understood or suspected to be courtiers: the artifice had its effect; Voltaire was betrayed by it into a declaration, that the eloquence of ancient Greece and Rome was revived in the British senate, and a speech of the late Earl of Chatham when Mr. Pitt, in opposition to one of Mr. Horatio Walpole, received the highest applause, and was by all that read it taken for genuine.

It must be owned, that with respect to the general principles avowed in the speeches, and the sentiments therein contained, they agree with the characters of the persons to whom they are ascribed. Thus, to instance in those of the upper house, the speeches of the Duke of Newcastle, the Lords Carteret and Ilay, are calm, temperate, and persuasive; those of the Duke of Argyle and Lord Talbot furious and declamatory, and Lord Chesterfield's[1] and Lord Hervey's florid but flimsy. In the other house the speeches may be thus characterised: the minister's mild and conciliatory; Mr. Pulteney's nervous, methodical, and weighty; Mr. Shippen's blunt and dogmatical; Sir John Barnard's clear, especially on commercial subjects; Lyttelton's stiff and imitative of the Roman oratory; and Pitt's void of argument, but rhapsodically and diffusively eloquent.

The confession of Johnson above-mentioned was the first that revealed the secret that the debates inserted in the Gentleman's Magazine were fictitious,

[1] [It is very remarkable that Dr. Maty, who wrote the life and edited the works of Lord Chesterfield, with the use of his lordship's papers, under the eye of his surviving friends, and in the lifetime of Johnson, should have published, as "specimens of his lordship's eloquence, in the strong nervous style of Demosthenes, as well as in the witty ironical manner of Tully, three speeches, which are certainly the composition of Dr. Johnson. See *Chesterfield's Works*, vol. ii. p. 319.—Ed.]

and composed by himself. After that, he was free, and indeed industrious, in the communication of it, for being informed that Dr. Smollet was writing a history of England, and had brought it down to the last reign, he cautioned him not to rely on the debates as given in the Magazine, for that they were not authentic, but, excepting as to their general import, the work of his own imagination.] Hawk. p. 122–129.

Johnson told me that as soon as he found that the speeches were thought genuine, he determined that he would write no more of them; "for he would not be accessary to the propagation of falsehood." And such was the tenderness of his conscience, that a short time before his death he expressed his regret for his having been the authour of fictions, which had passed for realities.

He nevertheless agreed with me in thinking, that the debates which he had framed were to be valued as orations upon questions of publick importance. They have accordingly been collected in volumes, properly arranged, and recommended to the notice of parliamentary speakers by a preface, written by no inferior hand[1]. I must, however, observe, that although there is in those debates a wonderful store of political information, and very powerful eloquence, I cannot agree that they exhibit the manner of each particular speaker, as Sir John Hawkins seems to think. But, indeed, what opinion can we have of his judgment, and taste in public speaking, who presumes to give, as the characteristicks of two celebrated orators, "the deep-mouthed rancour of Pulteney, and the yelping pertinacity of Pitt?" Hawk. p. 100.

[1] I am assured that the editor is Mr. George Chalmers, whose commercial works are well known and esteemed.—BOSWELL. [This collection is stated in the preface to the *Parliamentary History*, vol. ii. to be very incomplete—of thirty-two debates, twelve are given under wrong dates, and several of Johnson's

This year I find that his tragedy of Irene had been for some time ready for the stage, and that his necessities made him desirous of getting as much as he could for it without delay; for there is the following letter from Mr. Cave to Dr. Birch in the same volume of manuscripts in the British Museum, from which I copied those above quoted. They were most obligingly pointed out to me by Sir William Musgrave, one of the curators of that noble repository.

"Sept. 9, 1741.

"I have put Mr. Johnson's play into Mr. Gray's[1] hands, in order to sell it to him, if he is inclined to buy it; but I doubt whether he will or not. He would dispose of the copy, and whatever advantage may be made by acting it. Would your society[2], or any gentleman, or body of men that you know, take such a bargain? He and I are very unfit to deal with theatrical persons. Fleetwood was to have acted it last season, but Johnson's diffidence or [3] prevented it."

I have already mentioned that "Irene" was not brought into publick notice till Garrick was manager of Drury-lane theatre.

In 1742[4] he wrote for the Gentleman's Magazine the "Preface †," the "Parliamentary Debates *," "Essay on the Account of the Conduct of the Duchess

best compositions are wholly omitted; amongst others, the important debate of the 13th February, 1741, on Mr. Sandys's motion for the removal of Sir Robert Walpole; other omissions, equally striking, are complained of.—Ed.]

[1] A bookseller of London.

[2] Not the Royal Society: [as Boswell in his first and second editions had strangely supposed.—Ed.] but a Society for the encouragement of learning, of which Dr. Birch was a leading member. Their object was, to assist authours in printing expensive works. It existed from about 1735 to 1746, when, having incurred a considerable debt, it was dissolved.—Boswell.

[3] There is no erasure here, but a mere blank: to fill up which may be an exercise for ingenious conjecture.—Boswell. [Probably *pride*. Such, at least, is the common-place antithesis.—Ed.]

[4] From one of his letters to a friend, written in June, 1742, it should seem that he then purposed to write a play on the subject of Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, and to have it ready for the ensuing winter. The passage alluded to, however, is somewhat ambiguous; and the work which he then had in contemplation may have been a history of that monarch.—Malone.

of Marlborough (p. 128) *," then the popular topick of conversation. This Essay is a short but masterly performance. We find him, in No. 13 of his Rambler, censuring a profligate sentiment in that "Account;" and again insisting upon it strenuously in conversation. "An Account of the Life of Peter Burman (p. 206) *," I believe chiefly taken from a foreign publication; as, indeed, he could not himself know much about Burman; "Additions to his Life of Barretier[1] (p. 242) *;" "The Life of Sydenham" (p. 633) *, afterwards prefixed to Dr. Swan's edition of his works; "Proposals for printing Bibliotheca Harleiana, or a Catalogue of the Library of the Earl of Oxford (p. 636) *." His account of that celebrated collection of books, in which he displays the importance to literature, of what the French call a *catalogue raisonné*, when the subjects of it are extensive and various, and it is executed with ability, cannot fail to impress all his readers with admiration of his philological attainments. It was afterwards prefixed to the first volume of the Catalogue, in which the Latin accounts of books were written by him. He was employed in this business by Mr. Thomas Osborne, the bookseller, who purchased the library for 13,000*l.*, a sum which Mr. Oldys says, in one of his manuscripts, was not more than the binding of the books ha cost; yet, as Dr. Johnson assured me, the slowness of the sale was such, that there was not much gained by it. It has been confidently related, with many embellishments, that Johnson one day knocked Osborne down in his shop with a folio, and put his foot upon his neck. The simple truth I had from Johnson himself. "Sir, he was impertinent to me, and I beat

Sept. 10, 1773.

[1] [See *ante*, p. 119. Miss Carter received Barretier's life from his family in March or April of this year, and from it no doubt Johnson made these additions.—ED.]

him. But it was not in his shop: it was in my own chamber."

A very diligent observer may trace him where we should not easily suppose him to be found. I have no doubt that he wrote the little abridgement entitled "Foreign History," in the Magazine for December (p. 660). To prove it, I shall quote the Introduction.

"As this is that season of the year in which Nature may be said to command a suspension of hostilities, and which seems intended, by putting a short stop to violence and slaughter, to afford time for malice to relent, and animosity to subside; we can scarce expect any other account than of plans, negotiations, and treaties, of proposals for peace, and preparations for war."

As also this passage:

"Let those who despise the capacity of the Swiss tell us by what wonderful policy, or by what happy conciliation of interests, it is brought to pass, that in a body made up of different communities and different religions, there should be no civil commotions, though the people are so warlike, that to nominate and raise an army is the same."

I would also ascribe to him an "Essay on the Description of China, from the French of Du Halde (p. 320)†."

I am obliged to Mr. Astle for his ready permission to copy the two following letters, of which the originals are in his possession. Their contents show that they were written about this time, and that Johnson was now engaged in preparing an historical account of the British Parliament.

"TO MR. CAVE.

[*Aug.* 1743.]

"SIR,—I believe I am going to write a long letter, and have therefore taken a whole sheet of paper. The first thing to be written about is our historical design.

"You mentioned the proposal of printing in numbers as an alteration in the scheme, but I believe you mistook, some way or other, my meaning; I had no other view than that you might rather print too many of five sheets than of five and thirty.

"With regard to what I shall say on the manner of proceeding, I would have it understood as wholly indifferent to me, and my opinion only, not my resolution. *Emptoris sit eligere.*

"I think the insertion of the exact dates of the most important events in the margin, or of so many events as may enable the reader to regulate the order of facts with sufficient exactness, the proper medium between a journal, which has regard only to time, and a history which ranges facts according to their dependence on each other, and postpones or anticipates according to the convenience of narration. I think the work ought to partake of the spirit of history, which is contrary to minute exactness, and of the regularity of a journal, which is inconsistent with spirit. For this reason I neither admit numbers or dates, nor reject them.

"I am of your opinion with regard to placing most of the resolutions, &c. in the margin, and think we shall give the most complete account of parliamentary proceedings that can be contrived. The naked papers, without an historical treatise interwoven, require some other book to make them understood. I will date the succeeding facts with some exactness, but I think in the margin.

"You told me on Saturday that I had received money on this work, and found set down 13*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.* reckoning the half guinea of last Saturday. As you hinted to me that you had many calls for money, I would not press you too hard, and therefore shall desire only, as I send it in, two guineas for a sheet of copy; the rest you may pay me when it may be more convenient; and even by this sheet payment I shall, for some time, be very expensive.

"The Life of Savage I am ready to go upon; and in Great Primer, and Pica notes, I reckon on sending in half a sheet a day; but the money for that shall likewise lie by in your hands till it is done. With the debates, shall not I have business enough? if I had but good pens.

"Towards Mr. Savage's Life what more have you got? I would willingly have his trial, &c. and know whether his defence be at Bristol, and would have his collection of Poems, on account of the Preface;—'The Plain Dealer[1],'—all the magazines that have any thing of his or relating to him.

[1] "The Plain Dealer" was published in 1724, and contained some account of Savage.

"I thought my letter would be long, but it is now ended; and I am, sir, yours, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON.

"The boy found me writing this almost in the dark, when I could not quite easily read yours.

"I have read the Italian:—nothing in it is well.

"I had no notion of having any thing for the inscription[1]. I hope you don't think I kept it to extort a price. I could think of nothing till to-day. If you could spare me another guinea for the history, I should take it very kindly, to-night; but if you do not, I shall not think it an injury.——I am almost well again."

"TO MR. CAVE.

"SIR,—You did not tell me your determination about the *Soldier's Letter*[2], which I am confident was never printed. I think it will not do by itself, or in any other place, so well as the Mag. Extraordinary If you will have it at all, I believe you do not think I set it high, and I will be glad if what you give you will give quickly.

"You need not be in care about something to print, for I have got the State Trials, and shall extract Layer Atterbury and Macclesfield from them, and shall bring them to you in a fortnight; after which I will try to get the South Sea Report."

[*No date nor signature.*]

His writings in the Gentleman's Magazine in 1743, are, the "Preface†," "the Parliamentary Debates†," "Considerations on the Dispute between Crousaz and Warburton, on Pope's Essay on Man (p. 151. 587)†;" in which, while he defends Crousaz, he shows an admirable metaphysical acuteness and temperance in

[1] Perhaps the Runic Inscription, *Gent. Mag.* vol. xii. p. 132.—MALONE. [Certainly not—that was published in March, 1742, at least seventeen months before this letter was written; nor does there appear in the Magazine any inscription to which this can refer. It seemed at first sight probable that it might allude to the translation of Pope's Inscription on his Grotto, which appeared (with an apology for haste) in the next Magazine; but the expression "I could think of nothing till to-day," negatives that supposition. The inscription, then, was probably one which Cave requested Johnson to devise, and for which, when Johnson after a long delay produced it, Cave surprised him by paying.—ED.]

[2] I have not discovered what this was.

controversy; "Ad Lauram parituram Epigramma[1] (p. 378)*;" "A Latin Translation of Pope's Verses on his Grotto (p. 558)*."

And as he could employ his pen with equal success upon a small matter as a great, I suppose him to be the authour of an advertisement for Osborne, concerning the great Harleian Catalogue [at the end of the volume].

[The following elegant Latin ode, as Mr. Malone states, was many years ago pointed out to James Bindley, Esq. as written by Johnson, and may safely be attributed to him: Gent. Mag. v. 13, p. 548.

"AD ORNATISSIMAM PUELLAM.

Vanæ sit arti, sit studio modus,
Formosa virgo: sit speculo quies,
Curamque quærendi decoris
Mitte, supervacuosque cultus.

Ut fortuitis verna coloribus
Depicta vulgo rura magis placent,
Nec invident horto nitenti
Divitias operosiores:

Lenique fons cum murmure pulchrior
Obliquat ultro præcipitem fugam
Inter reluctantes lapillos, et
Ducit aquas temerè sequentes:

Utque interundas, inter et arbores,
Jam vere primo dulcè strepunt aves,
Et arte nullâ gratiores
Ingeminant sine lege cantus:

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[1] Angliacas inter pulcherrima Laura puellas,
Mox uteri pondus depositura grave,
Adsit, Laura, tibi facilis Lucina dolenti,
Neve tibi noceat prænituisse Deæ.

Mr. Hector was present when this epigram was made *impromptu*. The first line was proposed by Dr. James, and Johnson was called upon by the company to finish it, which he instantly did.—BOSWELL.

[This epigram seems hardly worth the distinction of being specially quoted. If the first line was proposed as a *thesis*, we cannot much admire the style in which it was followed up: the designation, surely, of the lady as *puella* would lead us to expect any thing rather than the turn which the epigram takes. Is not the second line gross and awkward; the third pedantic; and the conceit of the fourth not even classical—for Lucina was never famed for her beauty; and does not the whole seem a very strange subject for poetical compliment?—ED.]

Gent. Mag. v. 13, p. 548.

Nativa sic te gratia, te nitor
Simplex decebit, te veneres tuæ;
Nudus Cupido suspicatur
Artifices nimis apparatûs.

Ergo fluentem tu malè sedula,
Ne sæva inuras semper acu comam;
Nec sparsa odorato nitentes
Pulvere dedecores capillos;

Quales nec olim vel Ptolemæia
Jactabat uxor, sidereo in choro
Utcunque devotæ refulgent
Verticis exuviæ decori;

Nec diva mater, cum similem tuæ
Mentita formam, et pulchrior aspici,
Permisit incomtas protervis
Fusa comas agitare ventis[1]."]

But I should think myself much wanting, both to my illustrious friend and my readers, did I not introduce here, with more than ordinary respect, an exquisitely beautiful Ode, which has not been inserted in any of the collections of Johnson's poetry, written by him at a very early period, as Mr. Hector informs me, and inserted in the Gentleman's Magazine of this year (p. 375).

"FRIENDSHIP, AN ODE *.

Friendship, peculiar boon of heav'n,
The noble mind's delight and pride,
To men and angels only giv'n,
To all the lower world denied.

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[1] In vol. xiv. p. 46, of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, an elegant epigram was inserted, in answer to the above Ode, which was written by Dr. Inyon of Pulham, in Norfolk, a physician, and an excellent classical scholar:

"*Ad Authorem Carminis* AD ORNATISSIMAM PUELLAM.

"O cui non potuit, quia culta, placere puella,
Quî speras Musam posse placere tuam?"—MALONE.

[Out of deference to Mr. Malone and Mr. Bindley, whose assertion has been so long before the publick *uncontradicted*, the editor has inserted the foregoing ode; but it appears to him to be in a different and (may he venture to add?) *better* style than Johnson's; and he finds, in the *New Foundling Hospital for Wit*, that it is attributed to Bishop Lowth.—ED.]

While love, unknown among the blest,
Parent of thousand wild desires,
The savage and the human breast
Torments alike with raging fires;

With bright, but oft destructive, gleam,
Alike o'er all his lightnings fly;
Thy lambent glories only beam
Around the fav'rites of the sky.

Thy gentle flows of guiltless joys
On fools and villains ne'er descend;
In vain for thee the tyrant sighs,
And hugs a flatterer for a friend.

Directress of the brave and just,
O guide us through life's darksome way!
And let the tortures of mistrust
On selfish bosoms only prey.

Nor shall thine ardour cease to glow,
When souls to blissful climes remove:
What raised our virtue here below,
Shall aid our happiness above."

Johnson had now an opportunity of obliging his schoolfellow Dr. James, of whom he once observed, "no man brings more mind to his profession." James published this year his "Medicinal Dictionary," in three volumes folio. Johnson, as I understood from him, had written, or assisted in writing, the proposals for this work; and being very fond of the study of physick, in which James was his master, he furnished some of the articles. He, however, certainly wrote for it the Dedication to Dr. Mead †, which is conceived with great address, to conciliate the patronage of that very eminent man.

It has been circulated, I know not with what authenticity [1], that Johnson considered Dr. Birch as a

[1] [It is stated by Hawkins: we shall see all through this work, the very peculiar value which Johnson set on conversational powers; and there seems no reason to doubt that Dr. Birch's conversation exceeded his writings in vivacity. The editor has seen a MS. letter of Bishop Warburton's, in which he insists, in his usual decisive tone, on the poor use which Birch made in his writings of the materials which he possessed.—Ed.]

dull writer, and said of him, "Tom Birch is as brisk as a bee in conversation; but no sooner does he take a pen in his hand, than it becomes a torpedo to him, and benumbs all his faculties." That the literature of this country is much indebted to Birch's activity and diligence must certainly be acknowledged. We have seen that Johnson honoured[1] him with a Greek Epigram; and his correspondence with him, during many years, proves that he had no mean opinion of him.

"TO DR. BIRCH.

"Thursday, Sept. 29, 1743.

"SIR,—I hope you will excuse me for troubling you on an occasion on which I know not whom else I can apply to; I am at a loss for the lives and characters of Earl Stanhope, the two Craggs, and the minister Sunderland[2]; and beg that you will inform (me) where I may find them, and send any pamphlets, &c. relating to them to Mr. Cave, to be perused for a few days by, sir, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

His circumstances were at this time embarrassed; yet his affection for his mother was so warm, and so liberal[3], that he took upon himself a debt of hers, which, though small in itself, was then considerable to him. This appears from the following letter which

[1] [No doubt, as the case has turned out, Birch is *honoured* by Johnson's compliment; but at the time when it was written, Birch was of eminence in the literary world, and (what affected Johnson more nearly), high in the estimation of Cave; and Johnson's learned flatteries of him, Miss Carter, and Mr. Urban, were all probably prompted by the same motive, a desire to propitiate Cave.—ED.]

[2] [Wanted, probably, for the Parliamentary History mentioned in the preceding letter of August.—ED.]

[3] [Dr. Johnson was a good son, and even to indifferent persons the most charitable of men; but the praises which Boswell lavishes on this particular affair are uncalled for, as the debt was hardly so much Johnson's mother's as his own. It has already appeared that he had something of his father's property to expect after his mother's death (p. 48); this was the house in Lichfield, which was, it seems, mortgaged to Mr. Levett: by the nonpayment of the interest Levett would have been entitled to get possession of the property; and in that case Johnson would have lost his reversion, so that he very justly says, that "he looks upon this and the future interest on the mortgage as *his own debt*."—ED.]

he wrote to Mr. Levett, of Lichfield, the original of which lies now before me.

"TO MR. LEVETT, IN LICHFIELD.

"December 1, 1743.

"SIR,—I am extremely sorry that we have encroached so much upon your forbearance with respect to the interest, which a great perplexity of affairs hindered me from thinking of with that attention that I ought, and which I am not immediately able to remit to you, but will pay it (I think twelve pounds), in two months. I look upon this, and on the future interest of that mortgage, as my own debt; and beg that you will be pleased to give me directions how to pay it, and not to mention it to my dear mother. If it be necessary to pay this in less time, I believe I can do it; but I take two months for certainty, and beg an answer whether you can allow me so much time. I think myself very much obliged to your forbearance, and shall esteem it a great happiness to be able to serve you. I have great opportunities of dispersing any thing that you may think it proper to make publick. I will give a note for the money, payable at the time mentioned, to any one here that you shall appoint.—I am, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

"SAM JOHNSON.

"At Mr. Osborne's, bookseller, in Gray's Inn."

[1]It does not appear that he wrote any thing in 1744 for the Gentleman's Magazine but the Preface†. His life of Barretier was now re-published in a pamphlet by itself. But he produced one work this year, fully sufficient to maintain the high reputation which he had acquired. This was "THE LIFE OF

[1] [In this and the two next years, Mr. Boswell has not assigned to Johnson any contributions to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, yet there seems little doubt that from his connexion with that work he derived for some years the chief and almost the only means of subsistence for himself and his wife. perhaps he may have acted as general editor with an annual allowance, and he no doubt employed himself on more literary works than have been acknowledged. In this point the publick loss is perhaps not great. What he was unwilling to avow we need not be very solicitous to discover. Indeed his personal history is about this period a blank, hidden, it is to be feared, in the obscurity of indigence; and we cannot but think with a tender commiseration of the "*distress*" of such a man, rendered more poignant by being shared with a woman whom he so tenderly loved.—ED.]

RICHARD SAVAGE*;" a man of whom it is difficult to speak impartially, without wondering that he was for some time the intimate companion of Johnson; for his character[1] was marked by profligacy, insolence, and ingratitude: yet, as he undoubtedly had a warm and vigorous, though unregulated mind, had seen life in all its varieties, had been much in the company of the statesmen and wits of his time, he could communicate to Johnson an abundant supply of such materials as his philosophical curiosity most eagerly desired; and as Savage's misfortunes and misconduct had reduced him to the lowest state of wretchedness as a writer for bread, his visits to St. John's Gate naturally brought Johnson and him together[2].

[1] As a specimen of Savage's temper, I insert the following letter from him to a noble lord [Tyrconnel], to whom he was under great obligations, but who, on account of his bad conduct, was obliged to discard him. The original was in the hands of the late Francis Cockayne Cust, Esq. one of his majesty's counsel learned in the law:

"*Right Honourable* BRUTE *and* BOOBY,

"I find you want (as Mr. ——— is pleased to hint) to swear away my life, that is, the life of your creditor, because he asks you for a debt. The publick shall soon be acquainted with this, to judge whether you are not fitter to be an Irish evidence, than to be an Irish peer.—I defy and despise you.—I am, your determined adversary, R. S."—BOSWELL.

[2] Sir John Hawkins gives the world to understand, that Johnson, "being an admirer of genteel manners, was captivated by the address and demeanour of Savage, who, as to his exterior, was to a remarkable degree accomplished."—*Hawkins's Life*, p. 52. But Sir John's notions of gentility must appear somewhat ludicrous, from his stating the following circumstance as presumptive evidence that Savage was a good swordsman: "That he understood the exercise of a gentleman's weapon, may be inferred from the use made of it in that rash encounter which is related in his Life." The dexterity here alluded to was, that Savage, in a nocturnal fit of drunkenness, stabbed a man at a coffee-house, and killed him: for which he was tried at the Old Bailey, and found guilty of murder.

Johnson, indeed, describes him as having "a grave and manly deportment, a solemn dignity of mien; but which, upon a nearer acquaintance, softened into an engaging easiness of manners." How highly Johnson admired him for that knowledge which he himself so much cultivated, and what kindness he entertained for him, appears from the following lines in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for April, 1738, which I am assured were written by Johnson:

"*Ad* RICARDUM SAVAGE.

"*Humani studium generis cui pectore fervet*
O colat humanum te foveatque genus."—BOSWELL.

[Boswell should have stated his authority for attributing this poor, obscure, and harsh couplet to Johnson. The absurd title prefixed to it in the Magazine

It is melancholy to reflect, that Johnson and Savage were sometimes in such extreme indigence[1], that they could not pay for a lodging; so that they have wandered together whole nights in the streets[2]. Yet in these almost incredible scenes of distress, we may suppose that Savage mentioned many of the anecdotes with which Johnson afterwards enriched

(which Boswell, more prudently than candidly, sinks) is still less in Johnson's manner, and reminds us of *Marat* and *Anacharsis Clootz*.

"Ad Ricardum Savage,
Humani generis Amatorem!!!"

If Johnson wrote this sad stuff, it was probably before he knew much of Savage. They were not, as he himself said, acquainted till after *London* was written. Now *London* was written in 1738, and finished, *probably* in March, *certainly* in April; and Johnson was in negotiation with Cave and Dodsley for the sale of it when this epigram was published. Perhaps, at this time, Johnson supposed Savage to stand high in the opinion of Cave, and may have hoped to propitiate the latter by praise of the former, as there is reason to suspect he did, about the same time, in the cases of Miss Carter and Dr. Birch. (See *ante*, p. 136, note.)—ED.]

[1] The following striking proof of Johnson's extreme indigence, when he published the Life of Savage, was communicated to Mr. Boswell, by Mr. Richard Stowe of Apsley, in Bedfordshire, from the information of Mr. Walter Harte, authour of the Life of Gustavus Adolphus:

"Soon after Savage's Life was published, Mr. Harte dined with Edward Cave, and occasionally praised it. Soon after meeting him, Cave said, 'You made a man very happy t'other day.'—'How could that be?' says Harte; 'nobody was there but ourselves.' Cave answered, by reminding him that a plate of victuals was sent behind a screen, which was to Johnson, dressed so shabbily, that he did not choose to appear; but on hearing the conversation, he was highly delighted with the encomiums on his book."—MALONE.

[2] As Johnson was married before he settled in London, and must have always had a habitation for his wife, some readers have wondered how he ever could have been driven to stroll about with Savage, all night, for want of a lodging. But it should be remembered, that Johnson, at different periods, had lodgings in the vicinity of London; and his finances certainly would not admit of a double establishment. When, therefore, he spent a convivial day in London, and found it too late to return to any country residence he may occasionally have had, having no lodging in town, he was obliged to pass the night in the manner described above; for though, at that period, it was not uncommon for two men to sleep together, Savage, it appears, could accommodate him with nothing but his company in the open air.—The epigram given above, which doubtless was written by Johnson, shows, that their acquaintance commenced before April, 1738. See p. 103, n.—MALONE. [Mr. Malone appears to have forgotten that Sir J. Hawkins relates, that about this period of Johnson's intimacy with Savage, a kind of separation took place between him and his wife, who went to reside with some relations near the Tower: this was, probably, part of the period which Johnson calls their *distress;* which, if Mr. Malone's anecdote of the plate of victuals sent behind the screen be correct, must have extended to, at least, 1744, and may, it is feared, have lasted a few years later. As to the inference Mr. Malone draws from the epigram, it may be observed, that it by no means proves any *intimacy*, and it has been shown in the last note that if *any* acquaintance existed at the time the epigram was written, it must have been very recent.—ED.]

the life of his unhappy companion, and those of other poets.

He told Sir Joshua Reynolds, that one night in particular, when Savage and he walked round St. James's-square for want of a lodging, they were not at all depressed by their situation; but, in high spirits and brimful of patriotism, traversed the square for several hours, inveighed against the minister, and "resolved they would *stand by their country*."

I am afraid, however, that by associating with Savage, who was habituated to the dissipation and licentiousness of the town, Johnson, though his good principles remained steady, did not entirely preserve that conduct, for which, in days of greater simplicity, he was remarked by his friend Mr. Hector; but was imperceptibly led into some indulgences which occasioned much distress to his virtuous mind[1].

That Johnson was anxious that an authentick and favourable account of his extraordinary friend should first get possession of the publick attention, is evident from a letter which he wrote in the Gentleman's Magazine for August of the year preceding its publication.

[1] [Sir John Hawkins very uncharitably attributes to the influence of Savage a separation which took place (as he alone asserts), between Johnson and his wife about this period, "when she was harboured," as he expresses it, "by a friend near the Tower." This separation (if Hawkins be even so far correct) may be explained without any reference to Savage. The whole course of Johnson's life and conduct warrants us in supposing that this temporary separation was produced by pecuniary distress, and not by an interruption of affection. Johnson would be naturally solicitous that his wife should find in her own family a temporary refuge from the want with which he was struggling. There never has existed any human being, all the details of whose life, all the motives of whose actions, all the thoughts of whose mind, have been so unreservedly brought before the publick; even his prayers, his most secret meditations, and his most scrupulous self reproaches, have been laid before the world; and there is not to be found, in all the unparalleled mass of information thus exposed to us, a single trace to justify the accusation which Hawkins so wantonly and so odiously, and it may be assumed, so falsely makes. Johnson's fate in this particular is a little hard; he is at once ridiculed for being extravagantly uxorious, and censured for a profligate disregard of his wife.—Ed.]

"MR. URBAN,—As your collections show how often you have owed the ornaments of your poetical pages to the correspondence of the unfortunate and ingenious Mr. Savage, I doubt not but you have so much regard to his memory as to encourage any design that may have a tendency to the preservation of it from insults or calumnies; and therefore with some degree of assurance, entreat you to inform the publick, that his life will speedily be published by a person who was favoured with his confidence, and received from himself an account of most of the transactions which he proposes to mention, to the time of his retirement to Swansea in Wales.

"From that period, to his death in the prison of Bristol, the account will be continued from materials still less liable to objection; his own letters, and those of his friends, some of which will be inserted in the work, and abstracts of others subjoined in the margin.

"It may be reasonably imagined, that others may have the same design; but as it is not credible that they can obtain the same materials, it must be expected they will supply from invention the want of intelligence; and that under the title of 'The Life of Savage,' they will publish only a novel, filled with romantick adventures and imaginary amours. You may therefore, perhaps, gratify the lovers of truth and wit, by giving me leave to inform them in your Magazine, that my account will be published in 8vo. by Mr. Roberts, in Warwick-lane."

[*No signature.*]

In February, 1744, it accordingly came forth from the shop of Roberts, between whom and Johnson I have not traced any connexion, except the casual one of this publication[1]. In Johnson's "Life of Savage," although it must be allowed that its moral is the reverse of—"*Respicere exemplar vitæ morumque jubebo*," a very useful lesson is inculcated, to guard men of warm passions from a too free indulgence of them; and the various incidents are related in so clear

[1] [There seems reason to suppose that Cave sometimes permitted the name of another printer to appear on the title pages of books of which he was in fact the publisher: see *ante*, p. 108. In this case the fact is certain; as it appears from the letter to Cave, August, 1738 (*ante*, p. 131), that Johnson sold the work to him even before it was written.—ED.]

and animated a manner, and illuminated throughout with so much philosophy, that it is one of the most interesting narratives in the English language[1]. Sir Joshua Reynolds told me, that upon his return from Italy he met with it in Devonshire, knowing nothing of its authour, and began to read it while he was standing with his arm leaning against a chimney-piece. It seized his attention so strongly, that, not being able to lay down the book till he had finished it, when he attempted to move, he found his arm totally benumbed. The rapidity with which this work was composed is a wonderful circumstance.

Aug. 19, 1773. Johnson has been heard to say, "I wrote forty-eight of the printed octavo pages of the Life of Savage at a sitting; but then I sat up all night."

He exhibits the genius of Savage to the best advantage, in the specimens of his poetry which he has selected, some of which are of uncommon merit. We, indeed, occasionally find such vigour and such point, as might make us suppose that the generous aid of Johnson had been imparted to his friend. Mr. Thomas Warton made this remark to me; and, in support of it, quoted from the poem entitled "The Bastard," a line in which the fancied superiority of one "stamped in Nature's mint with ecstasy" is contrasted with a regular lawful descendant of some great and ancient family:

"No tenth transmitter of a foolish face."

But the fact is, that this poem was published some years before Johnson and Savage were acquainted.

[1] [It gives, like Raphael's Lazarus or Murillo's Beggar, pleasure as a work of art, while the original could only excite disgust. Johnson has spread over Savage's character the varnish, or rather the veil, of stately diction and extenuatory phrases, but cannot prevent the observant reader from seeing that the subject of this biographical essay was, as Mr. Boswell calls him, "an ungrateful and insolent profligate;" and so little do his works show of that poetical talent for which he has been celebrated, that if it had not been for Johnson's embalming partiality, his works would probably be now as *unheard* of as they are *unread*. —Ed.]

It nowhere appears when they became acquainted[1], and in the whole of Johnson's life of his profligate friend there is no kind of date.

It is remarkable, that in this biographical disquisition there appears a very strong symptom of Johnson's prejudice against players[2]; a prejudice which may be attributed to the following causes: first, the imperfection of his organs, which were so defective that he was not susceptible of the fine impressions which theatrical excellence produces upon the generality of mankind; secondly, the cold rejection of his tragedy; and, lastly, the brilliant success of Garrick, who had been his pupil, who had come to London at the same time with him, not in a much more prosperous state than himself, and whose talents he undoubtedly rated low, compared with his own. His being outstripped by his pupil in the race of immediate fame, as well as of fortune, probably made him feel some indignation, as thinking that whatever might be Garrick's merits in his art, the reward was too great when compared with what the most successful efforts of literary labour could attain. At all periods of his life Johnson used to talk contemptuously of players; but in this work he speaks of them with peculiar acrimony; for which, perhaps, there was formerly too much reason from the licentious and dissolute manners of those engaged in that profession.

[1] [This acquaintance probably commenced in the spring of 1738; certainly not earlier, if it be true, that they first met at St. John's Gate, as Johnson was not known to Cave till February or March, 1738.—ED.]

[2] [It is another of those remarkable inconsistencies in Johnson's character, before alluded to (p. 100), that as the first publication of this determined admirer of the metropolis was a satire on London, so the first production of this despiser of the stage should be a play! Mr. Boswell is obliged to admit what was too obvious to be concealed—but he does so with reluctance and great tenderness of expression—that Dr. Johnson *envied* Garrick; and we shall see that he even *envied* Sheridan, and to this source must, we fear, be attributed his "indignation" against players. This is no doubt a blot on Johnson's character, and we have seen, and shall see, too many instances of this infirmity.—ED.]

It is but justice to add, that in our own time such a change has taken place, that there is no longer room for such an unfavourable distinction.

His schoolfellow and friend, Dr. Taylor, told me a pleasant anecdote of Johnson's triumphing over his pupil, David Garrick. When that great actor had played some little time at Goodman's-fields, Johnson and Taylor went to see him perform, and afterwards passed the evening at a tavern with him and old Giffard. Johnson, who was ever depreciating stage-players, after censuring some mistakes in emphasis, which Garrick had committed in the course of that night's acting, said, "The players, sir, have got a kind of rant, with which they run on, without any regard either to accent or emphasis." Both Garrick and Giffard were offended at this sarcasm, and endeavoured to refute it; upon which Johnson rejoined, "Well now, I'll give you something to speak, with which you are little acquainted, and then we shall see how just my observation is. That shall be the criterion. Let me hear you repeat the ninth commandment: 'Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.'" Both tried at it, said Dr. Taylor, and both mistook the emphasis, which should be upon *not* and *false witness*[1]. Johnson put them right, and enjoyed his victory with great glee.

[1] I suspect Dr. Taylor was inaccurate in this statement. The emphasis should be equally upon *shalt* and *not*, as both concur to form the negative injunction; and *false witness*, like the other acts prohibited in the decalogue, should not be marked by any peculiar emphasis, but only be distinctly enunciated.—BOSWELL.

A moderate emphasis should be placed on *false*.—KEARNEY. [Dr. Kearney is clearly right; whatever emphasis there is should be on *false*. The error of Johnson's suggestion of making *two* or *three* emphatic words will be the more clearly shown by observing that several of the commandments consist, in the Greek and the Latin (as well as in the original Hebrew), of only *two* words, as Οὐ κλέψεις, *Non furaberis*; and Boswell's opinion, that *false witness* should not be emphatical, is contradicted by the fact, that in the Greek version *false witness* is *doubly* forbidden, Οὐ ψευδομαρτυρήσεις μαρτυρίαν ψευδῆ. Yet Dr. Wooll, in his Life of J. Warton (p. 101) seems to have so little considered the matter as to approve of, what he calls, Johnson's "*reproof of Garrick*."—ED.]

His "Life of Savage" was no sooner published, than the following liberal praise was given to it, in "The Champion," a periodical paper:

"This pamphlet is, without flattery to its authour, as just and well written a piece of its kind as I ever saw; so that at the same time that it highly deserves, it certainly stands very little in need of this recommendation. As to the history of the unfortune person, whose memoirs compose this work, it is certainly penned with equal accuracy and spirit, of which I am so much the better judge, as I know many of the facts mentioned to be strictly true, and very fairly related. Besides, it is not only the story of Mr. Savage, but innumerable incidents relating to other persons, and other affairs, which renders this a very amusing, and, withal, a very instructive and valuable performance. The authour's observations are short, significant, and just, as his narrative is remarkably smooth and well disposed; his reflections open to all the recesses of the human heart; and, in a word, a more just or pleasant, a more engaging or a more improving treatise, on all the excellences and defects of human nature, is scarce to be found in our own, or, perhaps, any other language[1]."

Johnson's partiality for Savage made him entertain no doubt of his story, however extraordinary and improbable. It never occurred to him to question his being the son of the Countess of Macclesfield, of whose unrelenting barbarity he so loudly complained, and the particulars of which are related in so strong and affecting a manner in Johnson's Life of him. Johnson was certainly well warranted in publishing his narrative, however offensive it might be to the lady and her relations, because her alleged unnatural and cruel conduct to her son, and shameful avowal of guilt, were stated in a Life of Savage now lying before me, which came out so early as 1727, and no attempt had been made to confute it, or to punish

[1] This character of the Life of Savage was not written by Fielding, as has been supposed, but most probably by Ralph, who, as appears from the minutes of the Partners of "The Champion," in the possession of Mr. Reed of Staple Inn, succeeded Fielding in his share of the paper, before the date of that eulogium.—BOSWELL.

the authour or printer as a libeller: but for the honour of human nature, we should be glad to find the shocking tale not true; and from a respectable gentleman[1] connected with the lady's family, I have received such information and remarks, as, joined to my own inquiries, will, I think, render it at least somewhat doubtful, especially when we consider that it must have originated from the person himself who went by the name of Richard Savage.

If the maxim, *falsum in uno, falsum in omnibus*, were to be received without qualification, the credit of Savage's narrative, as conveyed to us, would be annihilated; for it contains some assertions which, beyond a question, are not true.

1. In order to induce a belief that the Earl Rivers, on account of a criminal connexion with whom Lady Macclesfield is said to have been divorced from her husband, by Act of Parliament (1697), had a peculiar anxiety about the child which she bore to him, it is alleged, that his lordship gave him his own name, and had it duly recorded in the register of St. Andrew's, Holborn. I have carefully inspected that register, but no such entry is to be found[2].

[1] The late Francis Cockayne Cust, esq. one of his majesty's council.—Boswell.

[2] Mr. Cust's reasoning, with respect to the filiation of Richard Savage, always appeared to me extremely unsatisfactory; and is entirely overturned by the following decisive observations, for which the reader is indebted to the unwearied researches of Mr. Bindley.—The story on which Mr. Cust so much relies, that Savage was a supposititious child, not the son of Lord Rivers and Lady Macclesfield, but the offspring of a shoemaker, introduced in consequence of her real son's death, was, without doubt, grounded on the circumstance of Lady Macclesfield having, in 1696, previously to the birth of Savage, had a daughter by the Earl Rivers, who died in her infancy: a fact which, as the same gentleman observes to me, was proved in the course of the proceedings on Lord Macclesfield's Bill of Divorce. Most fictions of this kind have some admixture of truth in them.—Malone.

From "the Earl of Macclesfield's Case," which, in 1697-8, was presented to the Lords, in order to procure an act of divorce, it appears that Anne, Countess of Macclesfield, under the name of Madam Smith, was delivered of a male child in Fox-court, near Brook-street, Holborn, by Mrs. Wright, a midwife, on Saturday, the 16th of January, 1696-7, at six o'clock in the morning, who was baptized on the Monday following, and registered by the name of Richard, the son of John Smith, by Mr. Burbridge, assistant to Dr. Man-

2. It is stated, that "Lady Macclesfield having lived for some time upon very uneasy terms with her husband, thought a public confession of adultery the most obvious and expeditious method of obtaining her liberty;" and Johnson, assuming this to be true, stigmatises her with indignation, as "the wretch who had, without scruple, proclaimed herself an adulteress[1]." But I have perused the Journals of both houses of Parliament at the period of her divorce, and there find it authentically ascertained, that so far from voluntarily submitting to the ignominious charge of adultery, she made a strenuous defence by her counsel; the bill having been first moved the 15th of January, 1697-8, in the House of Lords, and proceeded on (with various applications for time to bring up witnesses at a distance, &c.) at intervals, till the 3d of March, when it passed. It was brought to the Commons, by a message from the Lords, the 5th of March, proceeded on the 7th, 10th, 11th, 14th, and

ningham's curate for St. Andrew's, Holborn: that the child was christened on Monday, the 18th of January, in Fox-court; and, from the privacy, was supposed by Mr. Burbridge to be "a by-blow, or bastard." It also appears that, during her delivery, the lady wore a mask; and that Mary Pegler, on the next day after the baptism (Tuesday), took a male child, whose mother was called Madam Smith, from the house of Mrs. Pheasant, in Fox-court [running from Brook-street into Gray's-inn-lane], who went by the name of Mrs. Lee.

Conformable to this statement is the entry in the register of St. Andrew's, Holborn, which is as follows, and which unquestionably records the baptism of Richard Savage, to whom Lord Rivers gave his own christian name, prefixed to the assumed surname of his mother: Jan. 1696-7. "RICHARD, son of John Smith and Mary, in Fox-court, in Gray's-inn-lane, baptized the 18th." —BINDLEY. [Mr. Cust and Mr. Boswell's share of the argument and assertions in the text not being distinguished, it is not possible to say which of them hazarded the assertion relative to the parish register of St. Andrew's, which certainly does contain what the text asserts is not to be found in it. If the maxim, therefore, *falsum in uno falsum in omnibus*, were to be applied to *them*, all their observations must be rejected. On the other hand, Mr. Bindley's researches seem only to prove what has been generally admitted, that Lady Macclesfield had a child, by Lord Rivers, baptized by the name of Richard; but it does not disprove the assertion, that this child died in its infancy, and that Savage, when between seventeen and eighteen, assumed its name. Savage, in a letter to Miss Carter, admits that he did pass under another name till he was seventeen years of age, but not the name of any person he lived with.—*Life of Mrs. Carter*, vol. i. p. 59.—ED.]

[1] No divorce can be obtained in the courts on confession of the party. There must be proofs.—KEARNEY.

15th, on which day, after a full examination of witnesses on both sides, and hearing of counsel, it was reported without amendments, passed, and carried to the Lords. That Lady Macclesfield was convicted of the crime of which she was accused, cannot be denied; but the question now is, whether the person calling himself Richard Savage was her son.

It has been said [1], that when Earl Rivers was dying, and anxious to provide for all his natural children, he was informed by Lady Macclesfield that her son by him was dead. Whether, then, shall we believe that this was a malignant lie, invented by a mother to prevent her own child from receiving the bounty of his father, which was accordingly the consequence, if the person whose life Johnson wrote was her son; or shall we not rather believe that the person who then assumed the name of Richard Savage was an impostor, being in reality the son of the shoemaker under whose wife's care [2] Lady Macclesfield's child was placed; that after the death of the real Richard Savage, he attempted to personate him; and that the fraud being known to Lady Macclesfield, he was therefore repulsed by her with just resentment.

There is a strong circumstance in support of the last supposition; though it has been mentioned as an aggravation of Lady Macclesfield's unnatural conduct, and that is, her having prevented him from obtaining the benefit of a legacy left to him by Mrs. Lloyd, his godmother. For if there was such a legacy left, his not being able to obtain payment of it must be imputed to his consciousness that he was not the real person. The just inference should be,

[1] By Johnson, in his *Life of Savage*.—MALONE.

[2] This, as an accurate friend remarks to me, is not correctly stated. The shoemaker under whose care Savage was placed, with a view to his becoming his apprentice, was not the husband of his nurse.—See Johnson's *Life of Savage*.—J. BOSWELL.

that by the death of Lady Macclesfield's child before its godmother, the legacy became lapsed, and therefore that Johnson's Richard Savage was an impostor.

If he had a title to the legacy, he could not have found any difficulty in recovering it; for had the executors resisted his claim, the whole costs, as well as the legacy, must have been paid by them, if he had been the child to whom it was given [1].

The talents of Savage, and the mingled fire, rudeness, pride, meanness, and ferocity of his character [2], concur in making it credible that he was fit to plan and carry on an ambitious and daring scheme of imposture, similar instances of which have not been wanting in higher spheres, in the history of different countries, and have had a considerable degree of success.

Yet, on the other hand, to the companion of Johnson (who, through whatever medium he was conveyed into this world, be it ever so doubtful, "to whom related, or by whom begot," was, unquestionably, a man of no common endowments), we must allow the weight of general repute as to his *Status* or parentage, though illicit; and supposing him to be an impostor, it seems strange that Lord Tyrconnel, the nephew of Lady Macclesfield, should patronise him, and even admit him as a guest in his family [3]. Lastly, it must ever appear very suspi-

[1] [This reasoning is decisive; if Savage were what he represented himself to be, nothing could have prevented his recovering his legacy.—ED.]

[2] Johnson's companion appears to have persuaded that lofty-minded man, that he resembled him in having a noble pride; for Johnson, after painting in strong colours the quarrel between Lord Tyrconnel and Savage, asserts that "the spirit of Mr. Savage, indeed, never suffered him to solicit a reconciliation: he returned reproach for reproach, and insult for insult." But the respectable gentleman to whom I have alluded has in his possession a letter from Savage, after Lord Tyrconnel had discarded him, addressed to the Reverend Mr. Gilbert, his lordship's chaplain, in which he requests him, in the humblest manner, to represent his case to the viscount.—BOSWELL.

[3] Trusting to Savage's information, Johnson represents this unhappy man's being received as a companion by Lord Tyrconnel, and pensioned by his lordship, as posterior to Savage's conviction and pardon. But I am assured that

cious that three different accounts of the Life of Richard Savage, one published in "The Plain Dealer," in 1724, another in 1727, and another by the powerful pen of Johnson, in 1744, and all of them while Lady Macclesfield [1] was alive, should, notwithstanding the severe attacks upon her, have been suffered to pass without any publick and effectual contradiction [2].

I have thus endeavoured to sum up the evidence upon the case as fairly as I can; and the result seems to be, that the world must vibrate in a state of uncertainty as to what was the truth.

This digression, I trust, will not be censured, as it relates to a matter exceedingly curious, and very in-

Savage had received the voluntary bounty of Lord Tyrconnel, and had been dismissed by him long before the murder was committed, and that his lordship was very instrumental in procuring Savage's pardon, by his intercession with the queen, through Lady Hertford. If, therefore, he had been desirous of preventing the publication by Savage, he would have left him to his fate. Indeed, I must observe, that although Johnson mentions that Lord Tyrconnel's patronage of Savage was "upon his promise to lay aside his design of exposing the cruelty of his mother," the great biographer has forgotten that he himself has mentioned that Savage's story had been told, several years before, in "The Plain Dealer;" from which he quotes this strong saying of the generous Sir Richard Steele, that the "inhumanity of his mother had given him a right to find every good man his father." At the same time it must be acknowledged, that Lady Macclesfield and her relations might still wish that her story should not be brought into more conspicuous notice by the satirical pen of Savage.—BOSWELL.

[1] Miss Mason, after having forfeited the title of Lady Macclesfield by divorce, was married to Colonel Brett, and, it is said, was well known in all the polite circles. Colley Cibber, I am informed, had so high an opinion of her taste and judgment as to genteel life and manners, that he submitted every scene of his "Careless Husband" to Mrs. Brett's revisal and correction. Colonel Brett was reported to be free in his gallantry with his lady's maid. Mrs. Brett came into a room one day in her own house, and found the colonel and her maid both fast asleep in two chairs. She tied a white handkerchief round her husband's neck, which was a sufficient proof that she had discovered his intrigue; but she never at any time took notice of it to him. This incident, as I am told, gave occasion to the well-wrought scene of Sir Charles and Lady Easy and Edging.—BOSWELL. [Can Mr. Boswell have been well informed that Lady Macclesfield, *after her divorce* and re-marriage, was *received in all the polite circles?*—ED.]

[2] [It should, however, be recollected, before we draw any conclusions from Lady Macclesfield's forbearance to prosecute a libeller, that however innocent she might be as to Savage, she was undeniably and inexcusably guilty in other respects, and would have been naturally reluctant to drag her frailties again before the publick. If it had not been for the accident of Johnson having, near twenty years after, happened to write Savage's life, the original libel would never have been heard of.—ED.]

timately connected with Johnson, both as a man and an authour.

He this year wrote the "Preface to the Harleian Miscellany *." The selection of the pamphlets of which it was composed was made by Mr. Oldys, a man of eager curiosity, and indefatigable diligence, who first exerted that spirit of inquiry into the literature of the old English writers, by which the works of our great dramatick poet have of late been so signally illustrated.

In 1745 he published a pamphlet entitled "Miscellaneous Observations on the Tragedy of Macbeth, with Remarks on Sir T. H.'s (Sir Thomas Hanmer's) edition of Shakspeare *." To which he affixed, proposal for a new edition of that poet.

As we do not trace any thing else[1] published by him during the course of this year, we may conjecture that he was occupied entirely with that work. But the little encouragement which was given by the publick to his anonymous proposals for the execution of a task which Warburton was known to have undertaken, probably damped his ardour. His pamphlet, however, was highly esteemed, and was fortunate enough to obtain the approbation even of the supercilious Warburton himself, who, in the Preface to his Shakspeare, published two years afterwards, thus mentioned it: "As to all those things which have been published under the titles of *Essays*, *Remarks*, *Observations*, &c. on Shakspeare, if you except some Critical Notes on Macbeth, given as a specimen of a projected edition, and written, as appears, by a man of parts and genius, the rest are absolutely below a serious notice."

[1] [Upon the produce of these few and small works he, of course, could not have existed: but how he was otherwise employed, as Boswell failed to discover, we cannot now hope to ascertain: see *ante*, p. 137, *note*.—Ed.]

Of this flattering distinction shown to him by Warburton, a very grateful remembrance was ever entertained by Johnson, who said, "He praised me at a time when praise was of value to me."

In 1746 it is probable that he was still employed upon his Shakspeare, which perhaps he laid aside for a time, upon account of the high expectations which were formed of Warburton's edition of that great poet. It is somewhat curious, that his literary career appears to have been almost totally suspended in the years 1745 and 1746, those years which were marked by a civil war in Great Britain, when a rash attempt was made to restore the house of Stuart to the throne. That he had a tenderness for that unfortunate house is well known; and some may fancifully imagine, that a sympathetick anxiety impeded the exertion of his intellectual powers; but I am inclined to think, that he was, during this time, sketching the outlines of his great philological work.

None of his letters during those years are extant, so far as I can discover. This is much to be regretted. It might afford some entertainment to see how he then expressed himself to his private friends concerning state affairs. Dr. Adams informs me, that "at this time a favourite object which he had in contemplation was, 'the Life of Alfred;' in which, from the warmth with which he spoke about it, he would, I believe, had he been master of his own will, have engaged himself, rather than on any other subject."

In 1747 it is supposed that the Gentleman's Magazine for May (p. 239) was enriched by him with five short poetical pieces, distinguished by three asterisks[1]. The first is a translation, or rather a para-

[1] In the *Universal Visiter*, to which Johnson contributed, the mark which is affixed to some pieces, unquestionably his, is also found subjoined to others, of which he certainly was not the authour. The mark, therefore, will not ascer-

phrase, of a Latin epitaph on Sir Thomas Hanmer. Whether the Latin was his, or not, I have never heard, though I should think it probably was, if it be certain that he wrote the English; as to which my only cause of doubt is, that his slighting character of Hanmer as an editor, in his "Observations on Macbeth," is very different from that in the Epitaph. It may be said, that there is the same contrariety between the character in the Observations, and that in his own Preface to Shakspeare; but a considerable time elapsed between the one publication and the other, whereas the Observations and the Epitaph came close together. The others are, "To Miss ——, on her giving the Authour a gold and silk net-work Purse of her own weaving;" "Stella in Mourning;" "The Winter's Walk;" "An Ode;" and, "To Lyce, an elderly Lady." I am not positive that all these were his productions; but as "The Winter's Walk" has never been controverted to be his, and all of them have the same mark, it is reasonable to conclude that they are all written by the same hand[2]. Yet to the Ode, in which we find a passage very characteristick of him, being a learned description of the gout,

"Unhappy, whom to beds of pain
Arthritick tyranny consigns,"

---

tain the poems in question to have been written by him. Some of them were probably the productions of Hawkesworth, who, it is believed, was afflicted with the gout. The verses on a purse were inserted afterwards in Mrs. Williams's Miscellanies, and are unquestionably Johnson's.—MALONE.

[There is no evidence whatever that *any* of these were Johnson's, and every reason to suppose that they are Hawkesworth's. The ode which Boswell doubts about, on internal evidence, is the ode to *Spring*, which, with those on *Summer*, *Autumn*, and *Winter*, have been of late published as Johnson's, and are, no doubt, all by the *same* hand. We see that *Spring* bears internal marks of being Hawkesworth's. *Winter* and *Summer*, Mr. Chalmers (in the preface to the *Adventurer* and in the *Biog. Dict.*) asserts to be his also; and (which seems quite conclusive) the index to the *Gent. Mag.* for 1748 attributes *Summer* to *Mr. Greville*, a name known to have been assumed by Hawkesworth. The verses on the "Purse," and to "Stella in Mourning," are certainly by the same hand as the four odes, and the whole must therefore be assigned to Hawkesworth, and should be removed from their place in Johnson's works.—ED.]

there is the following note, "The authour being ill of the gout:" but Johnson was not attacked with that distemper till a very late period of his life. May not this, however, be a poetical fiction? Why may not a poet suppose himself to have the gout, as well as suppose himself to be in love, of which we have innumerable instances, and which has been admirably ridiculed by Johnson in his "Life of Cowley?" I have also some difficulty to believe that he could produce such a group of *conceits* as appear in the verses to Lyce, in which he claims for this ancient personage as good a right to be assimilated to *heaven*, as nymphs whom other poets have flattered; he therefore ironically ascribes to her the attributes of the *sky*, in such stanzas as this:

"Her teeth the *night* with *darkness* dies,
She 's *starr'd* with pimples o'er;
Her tongue like nimble *lightning* plies,
And can with *thunder* roar."

But as, at a very advanced age, he could condescend to trifle in *namby-pamby* rhymes, to please Mrs. Thrale and her daughter, he may have, in his earlier years, composed such a piece as this.

It is remarkable, that in this first edition of "The Winter's Walk," the concluding line is much more Johnsonian than it was afterwards printed; for in subsequent editions, after praying Stella "to snatch him to her arms," he says,

"And *shield* me from the *ills* of life."

Whereas in the first edition it is

"And *hide* me from the *sight* of life."

A horrour at life in general is more consonant with Johnson's habitual gloomy cast of thought[1].

[1] [Johnson's habitual horror was not of *life*, but of *death*.—ED.]

I have heard him repeat with great energy the following verses, which appeared in the Gentleman's Magazine for April this year; but I have no authority to say they were his own. Indeed, one of the best criticks of our age suggests to me, that "the word *indifferently* being used in the sense of *without concern*, and being also very unpoetical, renders it improbable that they should have been his composition."

"*On Lord* LOVAT'S *Execution.*

"Pitied by *gentle minds*, KELMARNOCK died;
The *brave*, BALMERINO, were on thy side;
RADCLIFFE, unhappy in his crimes of youth,
Steady in what he still mistook for truth,
Beheld his death so decently unmoved,
The *soft* lamented, and the *brave* approved.
But LOVAT'S fate indifferently we view;
True to no *king*, to no *religion* true:
No *fair* forgets the *ruin* he has done;
No *child* laments the *tyrant* of his *son*;
No *tory* pities, thinking what he was;
No *whig* compassions, *for he left the cause*;
The *brave* regret not, for he was not brave;
The *honest* mourn not, knowing him a knave!"

In the Gentleman's Magazine for December this year, he inserted an "Ode on Winter" (p. 588), which is, I think, an admirable specimen of his genius for lyrick poetry.

[1] These verses are somewhat too severe on the extraordinary person who is the chief figure in them; for he was undoubtedly brave. His pleasantry during his solemn trial (in which, by the way, I have heard Mr. David Hume observe, that we have one of the very few speeches of Mr. Murray, now Earl of Mansfield, authentically given) was very remarkable. When asked if he had any questions to put to Sir Everard Fawkener, who was one of the strongest witnesses against him, he answered, "I only wish him joy of his young wife." And after sentence of death, in the horrible terms in such cases of treason, was pronounced upon him, and he was retiring from the bar, he said, "Fare you well, my lords; we shall not all meet again in one place." He behaved with perfect composure at his execution, and called out, "*Dulce et decorum est pro patriâ mori.*"—BOSWELL. [He was a profligate villain, and deserved death for his moral, at least, as much as for his political offences. There is in the Gentleman's Magazine for April an account of the behaviour of Lord Lovat at his execution, the latter part of which, censuring pleasantry in *articulo mortis*, bears strong internal evidence, both in matter and manner, of having been written by Johnson. The interest which he took in this transaction may have fixed in his memory the lines on Lord Lovat, which certainly do not resemble his own style.—ED.]

This year his old pupil and friend, David Garrick, having become joint patentee and manager of Drury-lane theatre, Johnson honoured his opening of it with a Prologue *, which for just and manly dramatick criticism on the whole range of the English stage, as well as for poetical excellence [1], is unrivalled. Like the celebrated Epilogue to the "Distressed Mother," it was, during the season, often called for by the audience. The most striking and brilliant passages of it have been so often repeated, and are so well recollected by all the lovers of the drama and of poetry, that it would be superfluous to point them out.

But the year 1747 is distinguished as the epoch when Johnson's arduous and important work, his "DICTIONARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE," was announced to the world by the publication of its Plan or PROSPECTUS.

How long this immense undertaking had been the object of his contemplation, I do not know. I once asked him by what means he had attained to that astonishing knowledge of our language, by which he was enabled to realize a design of such extent and accumulated difficulty. He told me, that "it was not the effect of particular study; but that it had grown up in his mind insensibly." I have been informed, by Mr. James Dodsley, that several years before this period, when Johnson was one day sitting in his brother Robert's shop, he heard his brother suggest to him, that a Dictionary of the English Language would be a work that would be well

[1] My friend, Mr. Courtnay, whose eulogy on Johnson's Latin poetry has been inserted in this work, is no less happy in praising his English poetry.

"But hark, he sings! the strain even Pope admires;
Indignant virtue her own bard inspires,
Sublime Juvenal he pours his lays,
And with the Roman shares congenial praise;—
In glowing numbers now he fires the age,
And Shakspeare's sun relumes the clouded stage."—BOSWELL.

received by the publick; that Johnson seemed, at first, to catch at the proposition; but, after a pause, said, in his abrupt decisive manner, "I believe I shall not undertake it." That he, however, had bestowed much thought upon the subject before he published his "Plan," is evident from the enlarged, clear, and accurate views which it exhibits; and we find him mentioning in that tract, that many of the writers whose testimonies were to be produced as authorities were selected by Pope; which proves that he had been furnished, probably by Mr. Robert Dodsley, with whatever hints that eminent poet had contributed towards a great literary project, that had been the subject of important consideration in a former reign.

The booksellers who contracted with Johnson, single and unaided, for the execution of a work, which in other countries has not been effected but by the co-operating exertions of many, were Mr. Robert Dodsley, Mr. Charles Hitch, Mr. Andrew Millar, the two Messieurs Longman, and the two Messieurs Knapton. The price stipulated was fifteen hundred and seventy-five pounds.

The "Plan" was addressed to Philip Dormer, Earl of Chesterfield, then one of his majesty's principal secretaries of state; a nobleman who was very ambitious of literary distinction, and who, upon being informed of the design, had expressed himself in terms very favourable to its success. There is, perhaps, in every thing of any consequence, a secret history which it would be amusing to know, could we have it authentically communicated. Johnson told me[1], "Sir, the way in which the plan of my Dictionary came to be inscribed to Lord Chesterfield was

[1] September 22, 1777, going from Ashbourne to Islam.—BOSWELL.

this: I had neglected to write it by the time appointed. Dodsley suggested a desire to have it addressed to Lord Chesterfield. I laid hold of this as a pretext for delay, that it might be better done, and let Dodsley have his desire. I said to my friend, Dr. Bathurst, 'Now, if any good comes of my addressing to Lord Chesterfield, it will be ascribed to deep policy, when, in fact, it was only a casual excuse for laziness [1].'"

It is worthy of observation, that the "Plan" has not only the substantial merit of comprehension, perspicuity, and precision, but that the language of it is unexceptionably excellent; it being altogether free from that inflation of style, and those uncommon but apt and energetick words, which, in some of his writings, have been censured, with more petulance than justice; and never was there a more dignified strain of compliment than that in which he courts the attention of one, who, he had been persuaded to believe, would be a respectable patron.

"With regard to questions of purity or propriety (says he), I was once in doubt whether *I* should not attribute to myself too much in attempting to decide them, and whether my province was to extend beyond the proposition of the question, and the display of the suffrages on each side; but I have been since determined, by your lordship's opinion, to interpose my own judgement, and shall therefore endeavour to support what appears to me most consonant to grammar and reason. Ausonius thought that modesty forbade him to plead inability for a task to which Cæsar had judged him equal:

'*Cur me posse negem, posse quod ille putat?*'

[1] [The reader will see, in the very next page, that this account of the affair was, to say the best of it, inaccurate; but if it were correct, would it not invalidate Johnson's subsequent complaint of Lord Chesterfield's inattention and ingratitude? for, even if his lordship *had* neglected what was dedicated to him only by laziness and accident, he could not justly be charged with ingratitude; a dedicator who means no compliment, has no reason to complain if he be not rewarded: but more of this hereafter.—Ed.]

And I may hope, my lord, that since you, whose authority in our language is so generally acknowledged, have commissioned me to declare my own opinion, I shall be considered as exercising a kind of vicarious jurisdiction; and that the power which might have been denied to my own claim, will be readily allowed me as the delegate of your lordship."

This passage proves, that Johnson's addressing his "Plan" to Lord Chesterfield was not merely in consequence of the result of a report by means of Dodsley, that the earl favoured the design; but that there had been a particular communication with his lordship concerning it. Dr. Taylor told me that Johnson sent his "Plan" to him in manuscript for his perusal; and that when it was lying upon his table, Mr. William Whitehead happened to pay him a visit, and being shown it, was highly pleased with such parts of it as he had time to read, and begged to take it home with him, which he was allowed to do; that from him it got into the hands of a noble lord, who carried it to Lord Chesterfield[1]. When Taylor observed this might be an advantage, Johnson replied, "No, sir, it would have come out with more bloom if it had not been seen before by any body."

The opinion conceived of it by another noble authour appears from the following extract from the Earl of Orrery's note to Dr. Birch:

"Caledon, Dec. 30, 1747.

"I have just now seen the specimen of Mr. Johnson's Dictionary, addressed to Lord Chesterfield. I am much pleased with the plan, and I think the specimen is one of the best that I have ever read. Most specimens disgust rather than prejudice us in favour of the work to follow; but the language of Mr. Johnson's is good, and the arguments are properly and modestly expressed. However, some expressions may be cavilled at, but they are trifles. I'll mention one: the *barren*

[1] [This also must be inaccurate, for the plan contains numerous allusions and references to Lord Chesterfield's opinions; and there is the evidence both of Lord Chesterfield and Johnson, that Dodsley was the person who communicated with his lordship on the subject. And the remark about the *bloom* of the *plan* seems almost unintelligible. The *bloom* of a work, as regards the public, cannot be impaired by its being communicated to two or three private friends.—Ed.]

laurel. The laurel is not barren, in any sense whatever; it bears fruits and flowers. *Sed hæ sunt nugæ*[1], and I have great expectations from the performance[2]."

That he was fully aware of the arduous nature of the undertaking he acknowledges; and shows himself perfectly sensible of it in the conclusion of his "Plan;" but he had a noble consciousness of his own abilities, which enabled him to go on with undaunted spirit.

Dr. Adams found him one day busy at his Dictionary, when the following dialogue ensued:—"ADAMS. This is a great work, sir. How are you to get all the etymologies? JOHNSON. Why, sir, here is a shelf with Junius, and Skinner, and others; and there is a Welsh gentleman who has published a collection of Welsh proverbs, who will help me with the Welsh. ADAMS. But, sir, how can you do this in three years? JOHNSON. Sir, I have no doubt that I can do it in three years. ADAMS. But the French Academy, which consists of forty members, took forty years to compile their Dictionary. JOHNSON. Sir, thus it is. This is the proportion. Let me see; forty times forty is sixteen hundred. As three to sixteen hundred, so is the proportion of an Englishman to a Frenchman." With so much ease and pleasantry could he talk of that prodigious labour which he had undertaken to execute.

The publick has had, from Sir John Hawkins[3], a long detail of what had been done in this country by prior Lexicographers; and no doubt Johnson was wise to avail himself of them, so far as they went: but the learned, yet judicious research of etymology,

[1] [*Nugæ*, indeed! for, though the laurel, of course, goes through the process of fructification, it is, not only in the allegorical but in the ordinary *sense* of the word, *barren*. Its flowers have neither hue nor odour, nor is its fruit edible. —ED.]

[2] Birch MSS. Brit. Mus. 4303.—BOSWELL.

[3] Sir John Hawkins's list of former English Dictionaries is, however, by no means complete.—MALONE.

the various, yet accurate display of definition, and the rich collection of authorities, were reserved for the superiour mind of our great philologist. For the mechanical part he employed, as he told me, six amanuenses; and let it be remembered by the natives of North Britain, to whom he is supposed to have been so hostile, that five of them were of that country[1]. There were two Messieurs Macbean; Mr. [Robert] Shiels, who, we shall hereafter see, partly[2] wrote the Lives of the Poets to which the name of Cibber is affixed; Mr. Stewart, son of Mr. George Stewart, bookseller at Edinburgh; and a Mr. Maitland. The sixth of these humble assistants was Mr. Peyton, who, I believe, taught French, and published some elementary tracts. Apr. 10, 1776.

To all these painful labourers Johnson showed a never-ceasing kindness, so far as they stood in need of it. The elder Mr. Macbean had afterwards the honour of being Librarian to Archibald, Duke of Argyle, for many years, but was left without a shilling. Johnson wrote for him a Preface to "A System of Ancient Geography:" and, by the favour of Lord Thurlow' got him admitted a poor brother of the Charter-house. For Shiels, who died of a consumption, he had much tenderness; and it has been

[1] [See *ante*, note, p. 109.—ED.]

[2] [It seems strange that Mr. Boswell should have stated that Shiels only *partly* wrote what are called "*Cibber's Lives of the Poets*," and intimated that Johnson contributed some *choice sentences* to these "*Lives*;" for Johnson himself, in the *Life of Hammond*, tells the story in a way which seems inconsistent with Mr. Boswell's assertions:—

"I take this opportunity to testify, that the book called *Cibber's Lives of the Poets* was not written, nor, I believe, ever seen by either of the Cibbers, but was the work of Robert Shiels, a native of Scotland, a man of a very acute understanding, though with little scholastic education, who, not long after the publication of his work, died in London of a consumption. His life was virtuous and his end was pious. Theophilus Cibber, then a prisoner for debt, imparted, as I was told, his name for ten guineas. The manuscript of Shiels is now in my possession." Johnson, we see, says the *whole work was Shiels'*, to the exclusion of *himself* as well as Cibber. See more on this subject *post*, 10th April, 1776.—ED.]

thought that some choice sentences in Shiels' Lives of the Poets were supplied by him. Peyton, when reduced to penury, had frequent aid from the bounty of Johnson, who at last was at the expense of burying him and his wife.

While the Dictionary was going forward, Johnson lived part of the time in Holborn, part in Gough-square, Fleet-street; and he had an upper room fitted up like a counting-house for the purpose, in which he gave to the copyists their several tasks. The words partly taken from other dictionaries, and partly supplied by himself, having been first written down with spaces left between them, he delivered in writing their etymologies, definitions, and various significations. The authorities were copied from the books themselves, in which he had marked the passages with a black-lead pencil, the traces of which could easily be effaced. I have seen several of them, in which that trouble had not been taken; so that they were just as when used by the copyists. It is remarkable that he was so attentive in the choice of the passages in which words were authorised, that one may read page after page of his Dictionary with improvement and pleasure; and it should not pass unobserved, that he has quoted no authour whose writings had a tendency to hurt sound religion and morality.

The necessary expense of preparing a work of such magnitude for the press must have been a considerable deduction from the price stipulated to be paid for the copyright. I understand that nothing was allowed by the booksellers on that account; and I remember his telling me, that a large portion of it having, by mistake, been written upon both sides of the paper, so as to be inconvenient for the compo-

sitor, it cost him twenty pounds to have it transcribed upon one side only.

He is now to be considered as "tugging at his oar," as engaged in a steady continued course of occupation, sufficient to employ all his time for some years; and which was the best preventive of that constitutional melancholy which was ever lurking about him, ready to trouble his quiet. But his enlarged and lively mind could not be satisfied without more diversity of employment, and the pleasure of animated relaxation. He therefore not only exerted his talents in occasional composition very different from Lexicography, but formed a club [that met every Tuesday evening at the King's Head, a famous beef-steak house] in Ivy-lane, Paternoster-row, with a view to enjoy literary discussion, and amuse his evening hours. [Thither he constantly resorted, and, with a disposition to please and be pleased, would pass those hours in a free and unrestrained interchange of sentiments, which otherwise had been spent at home in painful reflection. The persons who composed this little society were nine in number: they were, the Reverend Dr. Salter, father of the late master of the Charter-house; Dr. Hawkesworth; Mr. Ryland, a merchant, a relation of his[1]; Mr. John Payne, then a bookseller, but now or very lately chief accountant of the bank; Mr. Samuel Dyer, a learned young man intended for the dissenting ministry; Dr. William M'Ghie, a Scots physician; Dr. Edmund Barker, a young physician; Dr. Richard Bathurst, also a young physician; and Sir J. Hawkins[2].

Hawk. p. 219.

Hawk. p. 257.

[1] [His brother-in-law.—Ed.]

[2] [Sir J. Hawkins gives an account of the members of this club, too diffuse to be quoted here, but which is worthy the attention of any reader who may be curious about Johnson's early associates.—Ed.]

Hawk. p. 257. At these meetings Sir J. Hawkins observes not only that in conversation Johnson made it a rule to talk his best, but that on many subjects he was not uniform in his opinions, contending as often for victory as for truth: at one time *good*, at another *evil* was predominant in the moral constitution of the world. Upon one occasion, he would deplore the non-observance of Good-Friday, and on another deny, that among us of the present age there is any decline of public worship. He would sometimes contradict self-evident propositions, such as, that the luxury of this country has increased with its riches; and that the practice of card-playing is more general than heretofore. At this versatility of temper, none, however, took offence: as Alexander and Cæsar were born for conquest, so was Johnson for the office of a symposiarch, to preside in all conversations; and Sir J. Hawkins adds that he never yet saw the man who would venture to contest his right.

Let it not, however, be imagined, that the members of this club met together with the temper of gladiators, or that there was wanting among them a disposition to yield to each other in all diversities of opinion: and, indeed, disputation was not, as in many associations of this kind, the purpose of the meeting; nor were their conversations, like those of the Rota club, restrained to particular topicks. On the contrary, it may be said, that with the gravest discourses was intermingled "mirth, that after no repenting draws" *(Milton)*; for not only in Johnson's melancholy there were lucid intervals, but he was a great contributor to the mirth of conversation, by the many witty sayings he uttered, and the many excellent stories which his memory had treasured up, and he would on occasion relate; so that those are greatly

mistaken who infer, either from the general tendency of his writings, or that appearance of hebetude which marked his countenance when living, and is discernible in the pictures and prints of him, that he could only reason and discuss, dictate and control. Hawk. p. 259.

In the talent of *humour* there hardly ever was his equal. By this he was enabled to give to any relation that required it the graces and aids of expression, and to discriminate with the nicest exatcness the characters of those whom it concerned. In aping this faculty, Sir J. Hawkins says that he had seen even Warburton disconcerted, and when he would fain have been thought a man of pleasantry, not a little out of countenance.]

[Mr. Murphy, a better judge than Sir J. Hawkins, tells us, to the same effect, that Johnson was surprised to be told, *but it was certainly true*, that with all his great powers of mind, wit and *humour* were his most shining talents[1];] [and Mrs. Piozzi says, that his vein of humour was rich and apparently inexhaustible—to such a degree that Mr. Murphy used to say he was incomparable at buffoonery.] Murphy, Life, p. 139. Piozzi, p. 138. P. 159.

[For the sake of further relaxation from his literary labours, and probably also for Mrs. Johnson's health, he this summer visited Tunbridge Wells, then a place of much greater resort than it is at present. In the print[2], representing some of "the remarkable characters" who were at Tunbridge Wells in 1748, and copied from a drawing of the same size, Dr. Johnson stands the first figure.] [On the opposite side of the drawing his wife is represented, as are also Garrick, Cibber, Speaker Onslow, Lord Malone, note. ED.

[1] [This should be borne in mind in reading Johnson's conversations, because much of that peculiarity called *humour* cannot be adequately conveyed in words, and many things may appear trite, dull, or offensively rude in mere narration, which were enlivened or softened by the air and style of the delivery.—ED.]

[2] See *ante*, p. 68.

Chatham, Lord Lyttleton, and Miss Chudleigh, and several other celebrated persons; and in this assemblage, as has been already stated, neither Johnson or his wife exhibit any appearance of inferiority to the rest of the company.]

In the Gentleman's Magazine for May of this year he wrote a "Life of Roscommon *," with Notes (p. 216); which he afterwards much improved (indenting the notes into text), and inserted amongst his Lives of the English Poets.

Mr. Dodsley this year brought out his "Preceptor," one of the most valuable books for the improvement of young minds that has appeared in any language; and to this meritorious work Johnson furnished "The Preface *," containing a general sketch of the book, with a short and perspicuous recommendation of each article [this he sat up a whole night to write]; and also, "The Vision of Theodore, the Hermit, found in his Cell *," a most beautiful allegory of human life, under the figure of ascending the mountain of Existence. The Bishop of Dromore [Percy] heard Dr. Johnson say, that he thought this was the best thing he ever wrote [and he told Mr. Tyers that he composed it also, in one night, after finishing an evening in Holborn].

Tyers, p. 5.

Ibid.

In January, 1749, he published "The Vanity of Human Wishes, being the Tenth Satire of Juvenal imitated *." He, I believe, composed it the preceding year[1]. Mrs. Johnson, for the sake of country air, had lodgings at Hampstead, to which he resorted oc-

[1] Sir John Hawkins, with *solemn inaccuracy*, represents this poem as a consequence of the indifferent reception of his tragedy. But the fact is, that the poem was published on the 9th of January, and the tragedy was not acted till the 6th of the February following.—BOSWELL. [Mr. Boswell is here more *solemnly inaccurate* than Sir John, who, though he erroneously inverts the order of appearance of the two works, does *not* represent the poem as a consequence of the indifferent reception of the play, but, on the contrary, neutralizes the mistake he makes as to time, by warning his reader *not* to impute the translation of Juvenal to the failure of the tragedy.—ED.]

casionally, and there the greatest part, if not the whole, of this imitation was written. The fervid rapidity with which it was produced is scarcely credible. I have heard him say, that he composed seventy lines of it in one day; without putting one of them upon paper till they were finished [1]. I remember when I once regretted to him that he had not given us more of Juvenal's Satires, he said, he probably should give more, for he had them all in his head; by which I understood, that he had the originals and correspondent allusions floating in his mind, which he could, when he pleased, embody and render permanent without much labour. Some of them [2], however, he observed were too gross for imitation.

The profits of a single poem, however excellent, appear to have been very small in the last reign, compared with what a publication of the same size has since been known to yield. I have mentioned upon Johnson's own authority, that for his "London" he had only ten guineas; and now, after his fame was established, he got for his "Vanity of Human Wishes" but five guineas more, as is proved by an authentick document in my possession [3].

It will be observed, that he reserves to himself the right of printing one edition of this satire, which was his practice upon occasion of the sale of all his writings; it being his fixed intention to publish at some period, for his own profit, a complete collection of his works.

[1] [This was Johnson's general habit of composing: his defect of sight rendered writing and written corrections troublesome, and he therefore exercised his memory where others would have employed pen and paper.—ED.]

[2] [He probably said "some *passages* of them;" for there are none of Juvenal's Satires to which the same objection may be made as to one of Horace's, that it is *altogether* gross and licentious.—ED.]

[3] "Nov. 25, 1748, I received of Mr. Dodsley fifteen guineas, for which I assign to him the right of copy of an Imitation of the Tenth Satire of Juvenal, written by me; reserving to myself the right of printing one edition.—SAM. JOHNSON."—BOSWELL.

His "Vanity of Human Wishes" has less of common life, but more of a philosophick dignity than his "London." More readers, therefore, will be delighted with the pointed spirit of "London," than with the profound reflection of "The Vanity of Human Wishes." Garrick, for instance, observed in his sprightly manner, with more vivacity than regard to just discrimination, as is usual with wits, "When Johnson lived much with the Herveys, and saw a good deal of what was passing in life, he wrote his 'London,' which is lively and easy: when he became more retired, he gave us his 'Vanity of Human Wishes,' which is as hard as Greek. Had he gone on to imitate another satire, it would have been as hard as Hebrew[1]."

But "The Vanity of Human Wishes" is, in the opinion of the best judges, as high an effort of ethick poetry as any language can show. The instances of variety of disappointment are chosen so judiciously, and painted so strongly, that, the moment they are read, they bring conviction to every thinking mind.

That of the warrior, Charles of Sweden, is, I think, as highly finished a picture as can possibly be conceived. That of the scholar must have depressed the

[1] From Mr. Langton.—BOSWELL. [Garrick's criticism (if it deserves the name) and his facts are both unfounded. "The Vanity of Human Wishes" is in a graver and higher tone than the *London*, but not *harder* to be *understood*. On the contrary, some classical allusions, inconsistent with modern manners, obscure passages of the latter; while all the illustrations, sentiments, and expressions of the former are, though wonderfully noble and dignified, yet perfectly intelligible, and almost familiar. Moreover, we have seen that when Johnson wrote *London*, he was not living the gay and fashionable life which Mr. Garrick is represented as mentioning. Alas! he was starving in obscure lodgings on eightpence, and sometimes even fourpence a day (see *ante*, p. 73), and there is in *London* nothing to show any intimacy with the great or fashionable world. As to the *Herveys*, it may be here observed—contrary to Mr. Boswell's (as well as Mr. Garrick's) supposition—that he was intimate with that family previous to the publication of *London*:—that the sneer in that poem at "*Clodio's jest*," stood in the first edition "*H——y's jest*," and was probably aimed at Lord Hervey, who was a favourite theme of satire with the opposition writers of the day.—ED.]

too sanguine expectations of many an ambitious student[1].

[When Dr. Johnson, one day, read his own satire, in which the life of a scholar is painted, with the various obstructions thrown in his way to fortune and to fame, he burst into a passion of tears: Mr. Thrale's family and Mr. Scott[2] only were present, who, in a jocose way, clapped him on the back, and said, "What's all this, my dear sir? Why you, and I, and *Hercules*[3], you know, were all troubled with *melancholy*." He was a very large man, and made out the triumvirate with Johnson and Hercules comically enough.] Piozzi, p. 38, 39.

[1] In this poem one of the instances mentioned of unfortunate learned men is *Lydiat*:

"Hear Lydiat's Life, and Galileo's end."

The History of Lydiat being little known, the following account of him may be acceptable to many of my readers. It appeared as a note in the Supplement to the Gentleman's Magazine for 1748, in which some passages extracted from Johnson's poem were inserted, and it should have been added in the subsequent editions.—"A very learned divine and mathematician, Fellow of New College, Oxon, and Rector of Okerton, near Banbury. He wrote, among many others, a Latin treatise '*De natura cæli, &c.*' in which he attacked the sentiments of Scaliger and Aristotle, not bearing to hear it urged, *that some things are true in philosophy, and false in divinity*. He made above 600 Sermons on the harmony of the Evangelists. Being unsuccessful in publishing his works, he lay in the prison of Bocardo at Oxford, and in the King's Bench, till Bishop Usher, Dr. Laud, Sir William Boswell, and Dr. Pink, released him by paying his debts. He petitioned King Charles I. to be sent into Ethiopia, &c. to procure MSS. Having spoken in favour of monarchy and bishops, he was plundered by the parliament forces, and twice carried away prisoner from his rectory; and afterwards had not a shirt to shift him in three months, without he borrowed it, and died very poor in 1646."—BOSWELL. [In 1609 Lydiat accompanied Usher into Ireland, and obtained (probably by his interest) the office of chapel-reader in Trinity College, Dublin, at a salary of 3*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* per quarter: he was resident there about two years; and in March, 1612, it appears, that he had from the college "5*l.* to furnish him for his journey to England." The remembrance of Lydiat was traditionally preserved in Dublin College; and the Editor recollects to have heard, about 1797, that, in some ancient buildings, then recently removed, Lydiat had resided—evidence, either that he had left a high reputation behind him, or, more probably, that Johnson's mention of him had revived the memory of his sojourn in that university.—ED.]

[2] [George Lewis Scott, F. R. S., an amiable and learned man, formerly subpreceptor to George the Third, and afterwards a *Commissioner of Excise*, whom it seems Johnson did not now reckon as "one of the *lowest* of all human beings." See *ante*, p. 4.—ED.]

[3] [In allusion to the madness of Hercules on Mount Oeta.—ED.]

Were all the other excellencies of this poem annihilated, it must ever have our grateful reverence from its noble conclusion; in which we are consoled with the assurance that happiness may be attained, if we "apply our hearts" to piety:

"Where then shall hope and fear their objects find?
Shall dull suspense corrupt the stagnant mind?
Must helpless man, in ignorance sedate,
Roll darkling down the torrent of his fate?
Shall no dislike alarm, no wishes rise,
No cries attempt the mercy of the skies?
Inquirer, cease; petitions yet remain,
Which Heav'n may hear, nor deem Religion vain.
Still raise for good the supplicating voice,
But leave to Heaven the measure and the choice.
Safe in His hand, whose eye discerns afar
The secret ambush of a specious pray'r;
Implore His aid, in His decisions rest,
Secure, whate'er He gives, He gives the best:
Yet when the sense of sacred presence fires,
And strong devotion to the skies aspires,
Pour forth thy fervours for a healthful mind,
Obedient passions, and a will resign'd;
For love, which scarce collective man can fill;
For patience, sovereign o'er transmuted ill;
For faith, which panting for a happier seat,
Counts death kind Nature's signal for retreat:
These goods for man the laws of Heaven ordain,
These goods He grants, who grants the power to gain;
With these celestial wisdom calms the mind,
And makes the happiness she does not find[1]."

Garrick being now vested with theatrical power by being manager of Drury-lane theatre, he kindly and generously made use of it to bring out Johnson's

[1] In this poem, a line in which the danger attending on female beauty is mentioned, has very generally, I believe, been misunderstood:

"Yet Vane could tell what ills from beauty spring,
And Sedley curs'd the form that pleas'd a king."

The lady mentioned in the first of these verses was not the celebrated Lady Vane, whose memoirs were given to the publick by Dr. Smollett, but Anne Vane, who was mistress to Frederick, Prince of Wales, and died in 1736, not long before Johnson settled in London. Some account of this lady was published, under the title of "*The Secret History of Vanella*, 8vo. 1732." See also "*Vanella in the Straw*, 4to. 1732."—BOSWELL. [See *post*, 17 Aug. 1778, some observations respecting the lines in question.—ED.]

tragedy, which had been long kept back for want of encouragement. But in this benevolent purpose he met with no small difficulty from the temper of Johnson, which could not brook that a drama which he had formed with much study, and had been obliged to keep more than the nine years of Horace, should be revised and altered at the pleasure of an actor. Yet Garrick knew well, that without some alterations it would not be fit for the stage. A violent dispute having ensued between them, Garrick applied to the Reverend Dr. Taylor to interpose. Johnson was at first very obstinate. "Sir (said he), the fellow wants me to make Mahomet run mad, that he may have an opportunity of tossing his hands and kicking his heels[1]." He was, however, at last, with difficulty, prevailed on to comply with Garrick's wishes, so as to allow of some changes; but still there were not enough.

Dr. Adams was present the first night of the representation of *Irene*, and gave me the following account: "Before the curtain drew up, there were catcalls whistling, which alarmed Johnson's friends. The Prologue, which was written by himself in a manly strain, soothed the audience[2], and the play

[1] *Mahomet* was in fact played by Mr. Barry, and *Demetrius* by Mr. Garrick: but probably the parts were not yet cast.—BOSWELL. [It has been said that Garrick originally intended to have taken the part of Mahomet, and he probably yielded it to Barry to propitiate him in the author's favour.—ED.]

[2] The expression used by Dr. Adams was "soothed." I should rather think the audience was *awed* by the extraordinary spirit and dignity of the following lines:

> "Be this at least his praise, be this his pride,
> To force applause no modern arts are tried:
> Should partial catcalls all his hopes confound,
> He bids no trumpet quell the fatal sound;
> Should welcome sleep relieve the weary wit,
> He rolls no thunders o'er the drowsy pit;
> No snares to captivate the judgement spreads,
> Nor bribes your eyes, to prejudice your heads.
> Unmoved, though witlings sneer and rivals rail,
> Studious to please, yet not ashamed to fail,

went off tolerably, till it came to the conclusion, when Mrs. Pritchard, the heroine of the piece, was to be strangled upon the stage, and was to speak two lines with the bow-string round her neck. The audience cried out "*Murder! murder*[1]!" She several times attempted to speak; but in vain. At last she was obliged to go off the stage alive." This passage was afterwards struck out, and she was carried off to be put to death behind the scenes, as the play now has it. The Epilogue, *as Johnson informed me*[2], was written by Sir William Yonge. I know not how his play came to be thus graced by the pen of a person then so eminent in the political world[3].

Notwithstanding all the support of such performers as Garrick, Barry, Mrs. Cibber, Mrs. Pritchard, and every advantage of dress and decoration, the tragedy of Irene did not please the publick[4]. Mr. Garrick's

> He scorns the meek address, the suppliant strain,
> With merit needless, and without it vain;
> In Reason, Nature, Truth, he dares to trust:
> Ye fops be silent, and ye wits be just!"

[1] This shows how ready modern audiences are to condemn in a new play what they have frequently endured very quietly in an old one. Rowe has made *Moneses*, in *Tamerlane*, die by the bow-string, without offence.—MALONE. [And Davies tell us, in his "*Life of Garrick*," vol. i. p. 128, that the strangling Irene, contrary to Horace's rule, *coram populo*, was suggested by Garrick.—ED.]

[2] [Dr. Anderson says in his *Life*, that "Mr. Boswell ascribes this epilogue to Sir W. Yonge on no good foundation:" yet Mr. Boswell, who in his first edition had simply stated the fact, added in the second, "*as Johnson informed me.*" Mr. Murphy too asserts (Life, p. 154), that the epilogue was always supposed to be Johnson's, and that Mr. Boswell's account is a "new discovery, and by no means probable," and he adds, that "it were to be wished that the epilogue could be transferred to any other writer, it being the worst *jeu-d'esprit* which ever fell from Johnson's pen." Mr. John Taylor also has lately informed the editor that Murphy subsequently repeated to him that Johnson was the author of the epilogue. The first fourteen lines certainly deserve Murphy's censure, and could hardly have been written by the pen of Johnson; but the last ten lines are much better, and it may be suspected that these Johnson added to or altered from the original copy.—ED.]

[3] [It has been observed that he must, before this, have some acquaintance with Sir W. Yonge, who told him that *great* should be pronounced so as to rhyme with *seat*, while Lord Chesterfield had said it should rhyme to *state*. (See *post*, 27th March, 1772.)—ED.]

[4] I know not what Sir John Hawkins means by the *cold reception* of IRENE. [See *ante*, note, p. 166.] I was at the first representation, and most of the subse-

zeal carried it through for nine nights, so that the authour had his three nights' profits; and from a receipt signed by him, now in the hands of Mr. James Dodsley, it appears that his friend, Mr. Robert Dodsley, gave him one hundred pounds for the copy, with his usual reservation of the right of one edition.

IRENE, considered as a poem, is entitled to the praise of superiour excellence. Analysed into parts, it will furnish a rich store of noble sentiments, fine imagery, and beautiful language; but it is deficient in pathos, in that delicate power of touching the human feelings, which is the principal end of the drama[1]. Indeed Garrick has complained to me, that Johnson not only had not the faculty of producing the impressions of tragedy, but that he had not the sensibility to perceive them. His great friend Mr. Walmsley's prediction, that he would "turn out a fine tragedy writer," was, therefore, ill-founded. Johnson was wise enough to be convinced that he had not the talents necessary to write successfully

quent. It was much applauded the first night, particularly the speech on *to-morrow*. It ran nine nights at least. It did not indeed become a stock-play, but there was not the least opposition during the representation, except the first night in the last act, where Irene was to be strangled on the stage, which *John [Bull]* could not bear, though a dramatick poet may stab or slay by hundreds. The bow-string was not a Christian nor an ancient Greek or Roman death. But this offence was removed after the first night, and Irene went off the stage to be strangled.—Many stories were circulated at the time, of the authour's being observed at the representation to be dissatisfied with some of the speeches and conduct of the play himself; and, like La Fontaine, expressing his disapprobation aloud.—BURNEY.

[Mr. Murphy (Life, p. 53,) says, "the amount of the three benefit nights for the tragedy of IRENE, it is to be feared, were not very considerable, as the profit, that stimulating motive, never invited the author to another dramatick attempt." But Mr. Isaac Reed discovered that the author's three nights, after deducting about 190*l.* for the expenses of the house, amounted together to near 200*l.*, besides the 100*l.* for the copy. These were, at the time, large sums to Dr. Johnson.—ED.]

[1] Aaron Hill (vol. ii. p. 355), in a letter to Mr. Mallett, gives the following account of Irene after having seen it. "I was at the anomalous Mr. Johnson's benefit, and found the play his proper representative; strong sense ungraced by sweetness or decorum."—BOSWELL.

for the stage, and never made another attempt in that species of composition.

When asked how he felt upon the ill success of his tragedy, he replied, "Like the Monument;" meaning that he continued firm and unmoved as that column[1]. And let it be remembered, as an admonition to the *genus irritabile* of dramatick writers, that this great man, instead of peevishly complaining of the bad taste of the town, submitted to its decision without a murmur. He had, indeed, upon all occasions a great deference for the general opinion: "A man (said he) who writes a book, thinks himself wiser or wittier than the rest of mankind; he supposes that he can instruct or amuse them, and the publick to whom he appeals must, after all, be the judges of his pretensions."

On occasion of this play being brought upon the stage, Johnson had a fancy that as a dramatick authour his dress should be more gay than what he ordinarily wore; he therefore appeared behind the scenes, and even in one of the side-boxes, in a scarlet waistcoat, with rich gold lace, and a gold-lace hat. He humorously observed to Mr. Langton, "that when in that dress he could not treat people with the same ease as when in his usual plain clothes." Dress indeed, we must allow, has more effect even upon strong minds than one should suppose, without having had the experience of it. His necessary attendance while his play was in rehearsal, and during its performance, brought him acquainted with many of the performers of both sexes, which produced

[1] [Or, more modestly perhaps, that he felt no more than the Monument could feel. It may, indeed, be presumed, from Dr. Burney's evidence, and from considering that it produced him more money than he probably had ever before possessed, that he was far from thinking that his tragedy *had failed*.—Ed.]

a more favourable opinion[1] of their profession than he had harshly expressed in his Life of Savage. With some of them he kept up an acquaintance as long as he and they lived, and was ever ready to show them acts of kindness. He for a considerable time used to frequent the *Green Room*, and seemed to take delight in dissipating his gloom, by mixing in the sprightly chit-chat of the motley circle then to be found there. Mr. David Hume related to me from Mr. Garrick, that Johnson at last denied himself this amusement, from considerations of rigid virtue, saying, "I'll come no more behind your scenes, David; for the silk stockings and white bosoms of your actresses excite my amorous propensities."

["DR. JOHNSON TO MISS PORTER[2]. MS.

"Goff[3] Square, July 12, 1749.

"DEAR MISS,—I am extremely obliged to you for your letter, which I would have answered last post, but that ilness[3] prevented me. I have been often out of order of late, and have very much neglected my affairs. You have acted very prudently with regard to Levett's affair, which will, I think, not at all embarrass me, for you may promise him, that the mortgage shall be taken up at Michaelmas, or, at least, some time between that and Christmas; and if he requires to have it done sooner, I will endeavour it. I make no doubt, by that time, of either doing it myself, or persuading some of my friends to do it for me[4].

"Please to acquaint him with it, and let me know if he be satisfied. When he once called on me, his name was mistaken, and therefore I did not see him; but finding the mistake, wrote to him the same day, but never heard more of him, though I entreated him to let me know where to wait on him. You

[1] [This appears to have been by no means the case. His most acrimonious attacks on Garrick, and Sheridan, and players in general, were subsequent to this period.—ED.]

[2] [This letter, and some others, which will appear in their proper places, I owe to the unsolicited kindness of the Rev. Dr. Harwood, the historian of Lichfield, who procured the copies, with permission to publish them, from Mrs. Pearson of Lichfield, who is in possession of the originals.—ED.]

[3] [Thus in the original.—ED.]

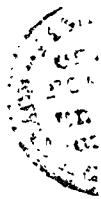
[4] [This confirms the statement, as to this debt, in page 136. n.—ED.]

MS. frighted me, you little gipsy, with your black wafer, for I had forgot you were in mourning, and was afraid your letter had brought me ill news of my mother, whose death is one of the few calamities on which I think with terrour. I long to know how she does, and how you all do. Your poor mamma is come home, but very weak; yet I hope she will grow better, else she shall go into the country. She is now up stairs, and knows not of my writing. I am, dear miss, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

In 1750 he came forth in the character for which he was eminently qualified, a majestick teacher of moral and religious wisdom. The vehicle which he chose was that of a periodical paper, which he knew had been, upon former occasions, employed with great success. The Tatler, Spectator, and Guardian, were the last of the kind published in England, which had stood the test of a long trial; and such an interval had now elapsed since their publication, as made him justly think that, to many of his readers, this form of instruction would, in some degree, have the advantage of novelty. A few days before the first of his Essays came out, there started another competitor for fame in the same form, under the title of "The Tatler Revived," which I believe was "born but to die." Johnson was, I think, not very happy in the choice of his title, "The Rambler;" which certainly is not suited to a series of grave and moral discourses; which the Italians have literally, but ludicrously, translated by *Il Vagabondo*, and which has been lately assumed as the denomination of a vehicle of licentious tales, "The Rambler's Magazine." He gave Sir Joshua Reynolds the following account of its getting this name: "What *must* be done, sir, *will* be done. When I was to begin publishing that paper, I was at a loss how to name it. I sat down at night upon my bedside, and resolved that I would not go to sleep till I had fixed its title.

The Rambler seemed the best that occurred, and I took it[1]."



With what devout and conscientious sentiments this paper was undertaken, is evidenced by the following prayer, which he composed and offered up on the occasion:

"Almighty God, the giver of all good things, without whose help all labour is ineffectual, and without whose grace all wisdom is folly: grant, I beseech Thee, that in this undertaking thy Holy Spirit may not be withheld from me, but that I may promote thy glory, and the salvation of myself and others: grant this, O Lord, for the sake of thy Son, JESUS CHRIST. Amen[2]." Pr. and Med. p. 9.

The first paper of the Rambler was published on Tuesday the 20th of March, 1749-50: and its authour was enabled to continue it without interruption, every Tuesday and Saturday, till Saturday the 17th of March[3], 1752, on which day it closed. This is a strong confirmation of the truth of a remark of his, which I have had occasion to quote elsewhere, that "a man may write at any time, if he will set himself doggedly to it;" for, notwithstanding his constitutional indolence, his depression of spirits, and his labour in carrying on his Dictionary, he answered the stated calls of the press twice a week from the stores 16 Aug. 1773.

[1] I have heard Dr. Warton mention, that he was at Mr. Robert Dodsley's with the late Mr. Moore, and several of his friends, considering what should be the name of the periodical paper which Moore had undertaken. Garrick proposed the *Salad*, which, by a curious coincidence, was afterwards applied to himself by Goldsmith:

"Our Garrick's a salad, for in him we see
Oil, vinegar, sugar, and saltness agree!"

At last, the company having separated, without any thing of which they approved having been offered, Dodsley himself thought of *The World*.—BOSWELL.

[2] In the Pemb. MS. the last sentence runs—"the salvation *both* of myself and others: grant this, O Lord, for the sake of Jesus Christ."—HALL.

[3] This is a mistake, into which the authour was very pardonably led by the inaccuracy of the original folio edition of the Rambler, in which the concluding paper of that work is [obviously by an error of the press] dated on "Saturday, March 17." But Saturday was in fact the *fourteenth* of March. This circumstance, though it may at first appear of very little importance, is yet worth notice; for Mrs. Johnson died on the *seventeenth* of March.—MALONE.

of his mind, during all that time; having received no assistance, except four billets in No. 10, by Miss Mulso, now Mrs. Chapone; No. 30, by Mrs. Catherine Talbot; No. 97, by Mr. Samuel Richardson, whom he describes in an introductory note as "An authour who has enlarged the knowledge of human nature, and taught the passions to move at the command of virtue[1]; and Numbers 44 and 10, by Mrs. Elizabeth Carter; [which latter, signed Chariessa, had much of his esteem, though he blamed Mrs. Piozzi for preferring it to the allegory (No. 45), where Religion and Superstition are indeed most masterly delineated.]

Piozzi, p. 38.

Posterity will be astonished when they are told, upon the authority of Johnson himself, that many of these discourses, which we should suppose had been laboured with all the slow attention of literary leisure, were written in haste as the moment pressed, without even being read over by him before they were printed. [The fine *Rambler* on Procrastination[2] was hastily composed in Sir Joshua Reynolds's parlour while the boy waited to carry it to the press, and numberless are the instances of his writing under the immediate pressure of importunity or distress.] It can be accounted for only in this way; that by reading and meditation, and a very close inspection of life, he had accumulated a great fund of miscellaneous

Piozzi, p. 37.

[1] [Lady Bradshaigh, one of Mr. Richardson's female sycophants, thus addresses him on the subject of this letter: "A few days ago I was pleased with hearing a very sensible lady greatly pleased with the Rambler, No. 97. She happened to be in town when it was published; and I asked if she knew who was the author? She said, it was supposed to be one who was concerned in the Spectators, it being much better written than any of the Ramblers. I wanted to say who was really the author, but durst not, without your permission." *Rich. Cor.* vol. vi. p. 108. It was probably on some such authority that Mr. Payne told Mr. Chalmers (*Brit. Ess.* vol. xix. p. 14), that No. 97 was "the only paper which had a prosperous sale, and was popular." The flatteries which Richardson's coterie lavished on him and all his works were quite extravagant: the paper is rather a poor one.—Ed.]

[2] [I suppose No. 134 is meant.—D'Israeli.]

knowledge, which, by a peculiar promptitude of mind, was ever ready at his call, and which he had constantly accustomed himself to clothe in the most apt and energetick expression. Sir Joshua Reynolds once asked him by what means he had attained his extraordinary accuracy and flow of language. He told him, that he had early laid it down as a fixed rule to do his best on every occasion, and in every company: to impart whatever he knew in the most forcible language he could put it in: and that by constant practice, and never suffering any careless expressions to escape him, or attempting to deliver his thoughts without arranging them in the clearest manner, it became habitual to him[1].

Yet he was not altogether unprepared as a periodical writer; for I have in my possession a small duodecimo volume, in which he has written, in the form of Mr. Locke's Common-Place Book, a variety of hints for essays on different subjects. He has marked upon the first blank leaf of it, "To the 128th page, collections for the RAMBLER;" and in another place, "in fifty-two there were seventeen provided; in 97—21; in 190—25." At a subsequent period (probably after the work was finished) he added, "In all, taken of provided materials, 30[2]."

Sir John Hawkins, who is unlucky[3] upon all occa- Hawk. p. 268.

[1] The rule which Dr. Johnson observed is sanctioned by the authority of two great writers of antiquity: "Ne id quidem tacendum est, quod eidem Ciceroni placet, nullum nostrum usquam negligentem esse sermonem: *quicquid loquemur, ubicunque, sit pro sua scilicet portione perfectum.*" Quinctil. x. 7.—MALONE. [It has been stated by Mr. Chalmers, in his edition of the British Essayists, that Johnson most elaborately revised and extensively corrected the Rambler when he collected them into volumes; but this does not disprove Mr. Boswell's account of the celerity and ease with which they were originally written.—ED.]

[2] [This, no doubt, means, that of the first 52 Ramblers, 17 had been prepared, and so on, till, at the completion of the whole 208 numbers, he found that only 30 had been formed of materials previously provided.—ED.]

[3] [In this instance Mr. Boswell is more unlucky than Hawkins, whose account is by no means incorrect. He knew very well, and distinctly states, that Addison's published *Notanda* were a mere pleasantry, consisting of topicks drolly selected and arranged; but he infers, rationally enough, that Addison had

sions, tells us, that "this method of accumulating intelligence has been practised by Mr. Addison, and is humorously described in one of the Spectators, wherein he feigns to have dropped his paper of *notanda*, consisting of a diverting medley of broken sentences and loose hints, which he tells us he had collected, and meant to make use of. Much of the same kind is Johnson's Adversaria." But the truth is, that there is no resemblance at all between them. Addison's note was a fiction, in which unconnected fragments of his lucubrations were purposely jumbled together, in as odd a manner as he could, in order to produce a laughable effect. Whereas Johnson's abbreviations are all distinct, and applicable to each subject of which the head is mentioned.

For instance, there is the following specimen:

"*Youth's Entry, &c.*

"Baxter's account of things in which he had changed his mind as he grew up. Voluminous.—No wonder.—If every man was to tell, or mark, on how many subjects he has changed, it would make vols. but the changes not always observed by man's self.—From pleasure to bus. [*business*] to quiet; from thoughtfulness to reflect. to piety; from dissipation to domestic. by imperfect gradat. but the change is certain. Dial *non progredi, progress. esse conspicimus.* Look back, consider what was thought at some dist. period.

"*Hope predom. in youth. Mind not willingly indulges unpleasing thoughts.* The world lies all enamelled before him, as a distant prospect sun-gilt[1]; inequalities only found by coming to it. *Love is to be all joy—children excellent*—Fame to be constant—caresses of the great—applauses of the learned—smiles of Beauty.

"*Fear of disgrace—Bashfulness*—Finds things of less importance. Miscarriages forgot like excellencies;—if remembered, of no import. Danger of sinking into negligence of reputation;—lest the fear of disgrace destroy activity.

taken the idea from his own real practice of collecting *notanda*; and he is quite justified in adding "much of the same kind are Johnson's Adversaria."—ED.]

[1] This most beautiful image of the enchanting delusion of youthful prospect has not been used in any of Johnson's essays.

"*Confidence in himself.* Long tract of life before him—No thought of sickness—Embarrassment of affairs.—Distraction of family. Publick calamities.—No sense of the prevalence of bad habits. Negligent of time—ready to undertake—careless to pursue—all changed by time.

"*Confident of others*—unsuspecting as unexperienced—imagining himself secure against neglect, never imagines they will venture to treat him ill. Ready to trust; expecting to be trusted. Convinced by time of the selfishness, the meanness, the cowardice, the treachery of men.

"Youth ambitious, as thinking honours easy to be had.

"Different kinds of praise pursued at different periods. Of the gay in youth,—dang. hurt, &c. despised.

"Of the fancy in manhood. Ambit.—stocks—bargains.—Of the wise and sober in old age—seriousness—formality—maxims, but general—only of the rich, otherwise age is happy—but at last every thing referred to riches—no having fame, honour, influence, without subjection to caprice.

"Horace.

"Hard it would be if men entered life with the same views with which they leave it, or left as they enter it—No hope—no undertaking—no regard to benevolence—no fear of disgrace, &c.

"Youth to be taught the piety of age—age to retain the honour of youth."

This, it will be observed, is the sketch of Number 196 of the Rambler. I shall gratify my readers with another specimen:

"*Confederacies difficult; why.*

"Seldom in war a match for single persons—nor in peace; therefore kings make themselves absolute. Confederacies in learning—every great work the work of one. *Bruy.* Scholars' friendship like ladies. Scribebamus, &c. Mart.[1] The apple of discord—the laurel of discord—the poverty of criticism. Swift's opinion of the power of six geniuses united. That union scarce possible. His remarks just;—man a social, not steady nature. Drawn to man by words, repelled by passions. Orb drawn by attraction, rep. [*repelled*] by centrifugal.

"Common danger unites by crushing other passions—but they return. Equality hinders compliance. Superiority pro-

[1] Lib. xii. 96. "In Tuccam æmulum omnium suorum studiorum."—MALONE.

duces insolence and envy. Too much regard in each to private interest;—too little.

"The mischiefs of private and exclusive societies.—The fitness of social attraction diffused through the whole. The mischiefs of too partial love of our country. Contraction of moral duties.—Οι φιλοι, ω φιλος.

"Every man moves upon his own centre, and therefore repels others from too near a contact, though he may comply with some general laws.

"Of confederacy with superiours every one knows the inconvenience. With equals, no authority;—every man his own opinion—his own interest.

"Man and wife hardly united;—scarce ever without children. Computation, if two to one against two, how many against five? If confederacies were easy—useless;—many oppresses many.—If possible only to some, dangerous. *Principum amicitias.*"

Here we see the embryo of Number 45 of the Adventurer; and it is a confirmation of what I shall presently have occasion to mention, that the papers in that collection marked T. were written by Johnson.

This scanty preparation of materials will not, however, much diminish our wonder at the extraordinary fertility of his mind; for the proportion which they bear to the number of essays which he wrote is very small; and it is remarkable, that those for which he had made no preparation are as rich and as highly finished, as those for which the hints were lying by him. It is also to be observed, that the papers formed from his hints are worked up with such strength and elegance, that we almost lose sight of the hints, which become like "drops in the bucket." Indeed, in several instances, he has made a very slender use of them, so that many of them remain still unapplied[1].

[1] Sir John Hawkins has selected from this little collection of materials, what he calls the "Rudiments of two of the papers of the Rambler." But he has not been able to read the manuscript distinctly. Thus he writes, p. 266, "Sailor's fate any mansion;" whereas the original is "Sailor's life my aversion." He has also transcribed the unappropriated hints on *Writers for bread*, in which he deciphers these notable passages, one in Latin, *fatui non famæ*, instead of *fami non famæ*; Johnson having in his mind what Thuanus says of the learned

As the Rambler was entirely the work of one man, there was, of course, such a uniformity in its texture, as very much to exclude the charm of variety; and the grave and often solemn cast of thinking, which distinguished it from other periodical papers, made it, for some time, not generally liked. So slowly did this excellent work, of which twelve editions have now issued from the press, gain upon the world at large, that even in the closing number the authour says, "I have never been much a favourite of the publick."

Yet, very soon after its commencement, there were who felt and acknowledged its uncommon excellence. Verses in its praise appeared in the newspapers; and the editor of the Gentleman's Magazine mentions, in October, his having received several letters to the same purpose from the learned. "The Student, or Oxford and Cambridge Miscellany," in which Mr. Bonnel Thornton and Mr. Colman were the principal writers, describes it as "a work that exceeds any thing of the kind ever published in this kingdom, some of the Spectators excepted,—if indeed they may be excepted." And afterwards, "May the publick favours crown his merits, and may not the English, under the auspicious reign of GEORGE the Second, neglect a man, who, had he lived in the first century, would have been one of the greatest favourites of Augustus." This flattery of the monarch had no effect. It is too well known, that the second George never was an Augustus to learning or genius.

[Richardson, the authour of Clarissa, to whom E. Cave had sent the first five numbers of the Rambler, became, as they proceeded, "so inexpressibly pleased

German antiquary and linguist, Xylander, who, he tells us, lived in such poverty, that he was supposed *fumi non famæ scribere*; and another in French, *Degente de futé et affamé d'argent*, instead of *Degouté de fame* (an old word for *renommé*) *et affamé d'argent*. The manuscript being written in an exceedingly small hand, is indeed very hard to read; but it would have been better to have left blanks than to write nonsense.—BOSWELL.

with them," that he wrote to Cave in strong commendation, and intimated his conviction (the name of the authour being still a secret) that Johnson was the only man who could write them. Cave's answer seems worth inserting, as giving a higher idea of his own station in society than has been hitherto entertained, as well as more clearly explaining some points of Dr. Johnson's life.

Rich. Cor. vol. I. p. 166.

"MR. CAVE TO MR. RICHARDSON.

"St. John's Gate, August 23, 1750.

"DEAR SIR,—I received the pleasure of your letter of the 9th inst. at Gloucester, and did intend to answer it from that city, though I had but one sound hand (the cold and rain on my journey having given me the gout); but, as soon as I could write, I went to Westminster[1], the seat of Mr. Cambridge[2], who entertained the Prince[3] there, and, in his boat, on the Severn. He kept me one night, and took me down part of his river to the Severn, where I sailed in one of his boats, and took a view of another of a peculiar make, having two keels, or being rather two long canoes, connected by a floor or stage. I was then towed back again to sup and repose. Next morning he explained to me the contrivance of some waterfalls, which seem to come from a piece of water which is four feet lower. The three following days I spent in returning to town, and could not find time to write in an inn.

"I need not tell you that the Prince appeared highly pleased with every thing that Mr. Cambridge showed, though he called him upon deck often to be seen by the people on the shore, who came in prodigious crowds, and thronged from place to place, to have a view as often as they could, not satisfied with one; so that many who came between the towing line and the bank of the river were thrown into it, and his royal highness could scarce forbear laughing; but sedately said to them, 'I am sorry for your condition.'

"Excuse this ramble from the purpose of your letter. I return to answer, that Mr. Johnson is the *Great Rambler*, being,

[1] So in the work quoted, but it is a mistake for Whitminster in Gloucestershire, the seat then, as now, of the family of Cambridge.

[2] [Richard Owen Cambridge, author of the Scribbleriad, and a considerable contributor to the *World*. He was born in 1714, and died in 1802 at his seat opposite Richmond.—ED.]

[3] [In July and August of this year the Prince and Princess of Wales, and their eldest daughter (the late Duchess of Brunswick), made a tour through Gloucestershire, Somersetshire, and Hampshire.—ED.]

as you observe, the only man who can furnish two such papers in a week, besides his other great business, and has not been assisted with above three. Rich. Cor. vol. 1. p. 166.

"I may discover to you, that the world is not so kind to itself as you wish it. The encouragement, as to sale, is not in proportion to the high character given to the work by the judicious, not to say the raptures expressed by the few that do read it; but its being thus relished in numbers gives hope that the sets must go off, as it is a fine paper, and, considering the late hour of having the copy, tolerably printed.

"When the authour was to be kept private (which was the first scheme), two gentlemen, belonging to the Prince's court, came to me to inquire his name, in order to do him service; and also brought a list of seven gentlemen to be served with the Rambler. As I was not at liberty, an inference was drawn, that I was desirous to keep to myself so excellent a writer. Soon after, Mr. Doddington[1] sent a letter directed *to the Rambler*, inviting him to his house, when he should be disposed to enlarge his acquaintance. In a subsequent number[2] a kind of excuse was made, with a hint that a good writer might not appear to advantage in conversation. Since that time several circumstances, and Mr. Garrick and others, who knew the authour's powers and style from the first, unadvisedly asserting their (but) suspicions, overturned the scheme of secrecy. (About which there is also one paper[2].)

"I have had letters of approbation from Dr. Young, Dr. Hartley, Dr. Sharpe, Miss Carter, &c. &c. most of them, like you, setting them in a rank equal, and some superiour, to the Spectators (of which I have not read many, for the reasons[3] which you assign): but, notwithstanding such recommendation, whether the price of *twopence*, or the unfavourable season of their first publication, hinders the demand, no boast can be made of it.

"The authour (who thinks highly of your writings) is obliged to you for contributing your endeavours; and so is, for several marks of your friendship, good sir, your admirer, and very humble servant, "E. CAVE."]

Johnson told me, with an amiable fondness, a little

[1] [George Bubb Doddington, afterwards Lord Melcombe, whose fame as a statesman and a wit has been obscured, if not obliterated, by the publication of his Diary.—ED.]

[2] [The two Ramblers referred to are probably Nos. 14 and 13.—ED.]

[3] [Richardson had said, "I remember not any thing in those *Spectator's* that I read, *for I never found time to read them all*, that half so much struck me." It seems very strange that men of literary habits, like Richardson and Cave, should have read the Spectator so imperfectly. It is the stranger, with regard to Richardson, for his only paper in the Rambler (No. 97) is written in the character of a professed admirer of the Spectator.—ED.]

pleasing circumstance relative to this work. Mrs. Johnson, in whose judgement and taste he had great confidence, said to him, after a few numbers of the Rambler had come out, "I thought very well of you before; but I did not imagine you could have written any thing equal to this." Distant praise, from whatever quarter, is not so delightful as that of a wife whom a man loves and esteems. Her approbation may be said to "come home to his *bosom;*" and being so near, its effect is most sensible and permanent.

Mr. James Elphinston [1], who has since published various works, and who was ever esteemed by Johnson as a worthy man, happened to be in Scotland while the Rambler was coming out in single papers at London. With a laudable zeal at once for the improvement of his countrymen, and the reputation of his friend, he suggested and took the charge of an edition of those Essays at Edinburgh, which followed progressively the London publication [2].

The following letter written at this time, though not dated, will show how much pleased Johnson was

[1] [Mr. James Elphinston was born in Edinburgh, in 1721. He, when very young, was a private tutor in two or three eminent families: but about 1752 set up a boarding-school at Kensington, where, as we shall see, Dr. Johnson sometimes visited him. He died in 1809. His works are forgotten or remembered for their absurdity. He translated Martial, of which Dr. Beattie says, "It is truly an unique—the specimens formerly published did very well to laugh at; but a whole quarto of nonsense and gibberish is too much. It is strange that a man not wholly illiterate should have lived so long in England without learning the language."—*Biog. Dic.* And it was, no doubt, of this strange work that Mrs. Piozzi relates, that "of a modern Martial, when it came out, Dr. Johnson said there are in these verses too much folly for madness, I think, and too much madness for folly."—*Piozzi*, p. 47.—ED.]

[2] It was executed in the printing-office of Sands, Murray, and Cochran, with uncommon elegance, upon writing paper, of a duodecimo size, and with the greatest correctness: and Mr. Elphinston enriched it with translations of the mottos. When completed, it made eight handsome volumes. It is, unquestionably, the most accurate and beautiful edition of this work; and there being but a small impression, it is now become scarce, and sells at a very high price. —BOSWELL. With respect to the correctness of this edition, my father probably derived his information from some other person, and appears to have been misinformed; for it was *not* accurately printed, as we learn from Mr. A. Chalmers.—J. BOSWELL. [Mr. Chalmers a little misrepresents, and Mr. James Boswell wholly mistook the fact. Elphinston's edition *was* correctly printed after the *original* folio numbers *as they came out.* Mr. Chalmers denies its accuracy, because it has not the various corrections *subsequently* made by Johnson when he *republished* the Rambler in volumes.—ED.]

with this publication, and what kindness and regard he had for Mr. Elphinston.

"TO MR. JAMES ELPHINSTON.

(*No date.*)

"DEAR SIR,—I cannot but confess the failures of my correspondence, but hope the same regard which you express for me on every other occasion, will incline you to forgive me. I am often, very often, ill; and, when I am well, am obliged to work: and, indeed, have never much used myself to punctuality. You are, however, not to make unkind inferences, when I forbear to reply to your kindness; for be assured, I never receive a letter from you without great pleasure, and a very warm sense of your generosity and friendship, which I heartily blame myself for not cultivating with more care. In this, as in many other cases, I go wrong, in opposition to conviction; for I think scarce any temporal good equally to be desired with the regard and familiarity of worthy men. I hope we shall be some time nearer to each other, and have a more ready way of pouring out our hearts.

"I am glad that you still find encouragement to proceed in your publication, and shall beg the favour of six more volumes to add to my former six, when you can with any convenience send them me. Please to present a set in my name to Mr. Ruddiman[1], of whom, I hear, that his learning is not his highest excellence. I have transcribed the mottos, and returned them, I hope not too late, of which I think many very happily performed. Mr. Cave has put the last in the magazine[2], in which I think he did well. I beg of you to write soon, and to write often, and to write long letters, which I hope in time to repay you; but you must be a patient creditor. I have, however, this of gratitude, that I think of you with regard, when I do not, perhaps, give the proofs which I ought, of being, sir, your most obliged and most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

[1] Mr. Thomas Ruddiman, the learned grammarian of Scotland, well known for his various excellent works, and for his accurate editions of several authours. He was also a man of a most worthy private character. His zeal for the Royal House of Stuart did not render him less estimable in Dr. Johnson's eye.—BOSWELL.

[2] If the Magazine here referred to be that for October, 1752 (see *Gent. Mag.* vol. 22, p. 468), then this letter belongs to a later period. If it relates to the Magazine for September, 1750 (see *Gent. Mag* vol. 20, p. 406), then it may be ascribed to the month of October in that year, and should have followed the subsequent letter.—MALONE. [It seems clear from the expression of the letter that it refers to Cave's *first* publication of the mottos, and was probably written in Oct. 1750; but in either case it should have followed the letter of the 25th Sept.; though the editor has not thought it worth while to disturb Mr. Boswell's original arrangement.—ED.]

This year he wrote to the same gentleman another letter upon a mournful occasion.

"TO MR. JAMES ELPHINSTON.

"September 25, 1750.

"DEAR SIR,—You have, as I find by every kind of evidence, lost an excellent mother; and I hope you will not think me incapable of partaking of your grief. I have a mother, now eighty-two years of age, whom, therefore, I must soon lose, unless it please God that she should rather mourn for me. I read the letters in which you relate your mother's death to Mrs. Strahan[1], and think I do myself honour, when I tell you that I read them with tears; but tears are neither to *you* nor to *me* of any farther use, when once the tribute of nature has been paid. The business of life summons us away from useless grief, and calls us to the exercise of those virtues of which we are lamenting our deprivation. The greatest benefit which one friend can confer upon another is to guard, and excite, and elevate, his virtues. This your mother will still perform, if you diligently preserve the memory of her life, and of her death: a life, so far as I can learn, useful, wise, and innocent; and a death resigned, peaceful, and holy. I cannot forbear to mention, that neither reason nor revelation denies you to hope, that you may increase her happiness by obeying her precepts; and that she may, in her present state, look with pleasure upon every act of virtue to which her instructions or example have contributed[2]. Whether this be more than a pleasing dream, or a just opinion of separate spirits, is, indeed, of no great importance to us, when we consider ourselves as acting under the eye of God; yet, surely, there is something pleasing in the belief, that our separation from those whom we love is merely corporeal; and it may be a great incitement to virtuous friendship, if it can be made probable that that union that has received the divine approbation shall continue to eternity.

"There is one expedient by which you may, in some degree, continue her presence. If you write down minutely what you remember of her from your earliest years, you will read it with great pleasure, and receive from it many hints of soothing recollection, when time shall remove her yet farther from you, and

[1] [Sister to Mr. Elphinston.—*Gent. Mag.* 1785, p. 755. It is to be observed, that, for many of his early acquaintance, Johnson was indebted to the society of Mr. Strahan.—ED.]

[2] [This letter may, as the editor of the Gentleman's Magazine observes (*loc. cit.*), be read as a commentary on the celebrated passages in Johnson's Meditations, relative to the intermediate state of departed friends.—ED.]

your grief shall be matured to veneration. To this, however painful for the present, I cannot but advise you, as to a source of comfort and satisfaction in the time to come; for all comfort and all satisfaction is sincerely wished you by, dear sir, your most obliged, most obedient, and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

The Rambler has increased in fame as in age. Soon after its first folio edition was concluded, it was published in six duodecimo volumes[1]; and its authour lived to see ten numerous editions of it in London, beside those of Ireland and Scotland.

I profess myself to have ever entertained a profound veneration for the astonishing force and vivacity of mind which the Rambler exhibits. That Johnson had penetration enough to see, and, seeing, would not disguise, the general misery of man in this state of being, may have given rise to the superficial notion of his being too stern a philosopher. But men of reflection will be sensible that he has given a true representation of human existence, and that he has, at the same time, with a generous benevolence, displayed every consolation which our state affords us; not only those arising from the hopes of futurity, but such as may be attained in the immediate progress through life. He has not depressed the soul to despondency and indifference. He has every where inculcated study, labour, and exertion. Nay, he has shown, in a very odious light, a man, whose practice is to go about darkening the views of others, by perpetual complaints of evil, and awakening those

[1] This is not quite accurate. In the *Gent. Mag.* for Nov. 1751, while the work was yet proceeding, is an advertisement, announcing that *four* volumes of the Rambler would speedily be published; and, it is believed, that they were published in the next month. The fifth and sixth volumes, with tables of contents, and translations of the mottos, were published in July, 1752, by Payne (the original publisher), three months after the close of the work. When the Rambler was collected into volumes, Johnson revised and corrected it throughout. Mr. Boswell was not aware of this circumstance, which has lately been discovered, and accurately stated, by Mr. Alexander Chalmers, in a new edition of these and various other periodical essays, under the title of "The British Essayists."—MALONE.

considerations of danger and distress, which are, for the most part, lulled into a quiet oblivion. This he has done very strongly in his character of Suspirius, (No. 55) from which Goldsmith took that of Croaker, in his comedy of "The Good-natured Man," as Johnson told me he acknowledged to him, and which is, indeed, very obvious.

To point out the numerous subjects which the Rambler treats, with a dignity and perspicuity which are there united in a manner which we shall in vain look for any where else, would take up too large a portion of my book, and would, I trust, be superfluous, considering how universally those volumes are now disseminated. Even the most condensed and brilliant sentences which they contain, and which have very properly been selected under the name of "BEAUTIES[1]," are of considerable bulk. But I may shortly observe, that the Rambler furnishes such an assemblage of discourses on practical religion and moral duty, of critical investigations, and allegorical and oriental tales, that no mind can be thought very deficient that has, by constant study and meditation, assimilated to itself all that may be found there. No. 7, written in Passion-week, on abstraction and self-examination, and No. 110, on penitence and the placability of the Divine Nature, cannot be too often read. No. 54, on the effect which the death of a friend should have upon us, though rather too dispiriting, may be occasionally very medicinal to the mind. Every one must suppose the writer to have been deeply impressed by a real scene; but he told me that was not the case; which shows how well his fancy could conduct him to the "house of mourning."

[1] Dr. Johnson was gratified by seeing this selection, and wrote to Mr. Kearsley, bookseller, in Fleet street, the following note:—

"Mr. Johnson sends compliments to Mr. Kearsley, and begs the favour of seeing him as soon as he can. Mr. Kearsley is desired to bring with him the last edition of what he has honoured with the name of BEAUTIES. May 20, 1782."—BOSWELL.

Some of these more solemn papers, I doubt not, particularly attracted the notice of Dr. Young, the authour of "The Night Thoughts," of whom my estimation is such, as to reckon his applause an honour even to Johnson. I have seen some volumes of Dr. Young's copy of the Rambler, in which he has marked the passages which he thought particularly excellent, by folding down a corner of the page; and such as he rated in a supereminent degree are marked by double folds. I am sorry that some of the volumes are lost. Johnson was pleased when told of the minute attention with which Young had signified his approbation of his essays.

I will venture to say, that in no writings whatever can be found more *bark and steel for the mind*, if I may use the expression; more that can brace and invigorate every manly and noble sentiment. No. 32, on patience, even under extreme misery, is wonderfully lofty, and as much above the rant of stoicism, as the sun of Revelation is brighter than the twilight of Pagan philosophy. I never read the following sentence without feeling my frame thrill: "I think there is some reason for questioning whether the body and mind are not so proportioned, that the one can bear all which can be inflicted on the other; whether virtue cannot stand its ground as long as life, and whether a soul well principled will not be sooner separated than subdued."

Though instruction be the predominant purpose of the Rambler, yet it is enlivened with a considerable portion of amusement. Nothing can be more erroneous than the notion which some persons have entertained, that Johnson was then a retired authour, ignorant of the world; and, of consequence, that he wrote only from his imagination, when he described characters and manners. He said to me that, before

he wrote that work, he had been "running about the world," as he expressed it, more than almost any body; and I have heard him relate, with much satisfaction, that several of the characters in the Rambler were drawn so naturally, that when it first circulated in numbers, a club in one of the towns in Essex imagined themselves to be severally exhibited in it, and were much incensed against a person who, they suspected, had thus made them objects of publick notice; nor were they quieted till authentick assurance was given them, that the Rambler was written by a person who had never heard of any one of them[1]. Some of the characters are believed to have been actually drawn from the life[2], particularly that of Prospero from Garrick[3], who never entirely forgave its pointed satire. [Sophron was likewise a picture drawn from reality; and by Gelidus, the philosopher, he meant to represent Mr. Coulson, a mathematician, who formerly lived at Rochester.

Piozzi, p. 37.

[1] [This anecdote was, according to Mrs. Piozzi, communicated to Johnson by Mr. Murphy, but (as the lady tells it), with details which savour more of a desire to make a *good* story than to tell a true one. See *Piozzi*, p. 180.—ED.]

[2] That of GELIDUS, in No. 24, from Professor Colson, and that of EUPHUES in the same paper, which, with many others, was doubtless drawn from the life. EUPHUES, I once thought, might have been intended to represent either Lord Chesterfield or Soame Jenyns; but Mr. Bindley, with more probability, thinks that George Bubb Doddington, who was remarkable for the homeliness of his person, and the finery of his dress, was the person meant under that character.—MALONE. [See (*ante*, p. 72) reasons for doubting that *Gelidus* could be meant for Professor Colson. The folly of such *guesses* at characters is forcibly exemplified in Mr. Malone's producing three such different candidates for that of *Euphues*, as Lord Chesterfield, Soame Jenyns, and Bubb Doddington!—ED.]

[3] [Having just seen Garrick's generous and successful endeavours to advance the fame and improve the fortunes of his friend, it were melancholy to be obliged, by the evidence of Boswell, Murphy, and Mrs. Piozzi, to believe that Johnson meant to satirize that amiable, inoffensive, and (to him) most friendly man, whose profession, as well as his personal feelings, rendered him peculiarly sensitive to such attacks. Mr. Murphy, with less taste and good nature than is usual to him, seems to make light of poor Garrick's vexation; but amongst the many instances which have been adduced of that infirmity of Johnson's temper, which almost amounted to *envy*, there is none that seems, all the circumstances considered, more unjustifiable than this would have been. Hawkins, however, who seldom missed an opportunity of displaying Johnson's faults or frailties, does not, even when censuring his conduct towards Garrick, allude to this offence. (See *Life*, p. 421). Let us therefore hope, that the other biographers made an application of the character of Prospero which Johnson did not intend.—ED.]

The man immortalized for purring like a cat was, as he told Mrs. Piozzi, one Busby, a proctor in the Commons. He who barked so ingeniously, and then called the drawer to drive away the dog, was father to Dr. Salter, of the Charterhouse. He who sung a song, and, by correspondent motions of his arm, chalked out a giant on the wall, was one Richardson, an attorney [1].] Piozzi, p. 37.

For instances of fertility of fancy, and accurate description of real life, I appeal to No. 19, a man who wanders from one profession to another, with most plausible reasons for every change: No. 34, female fastidiousness and timorous refinement: No. 82, a virtuoso who has collected curiosities: No. 88, petty modes of entertaining a company, and conciliating kindness: No. 182, fortune-hunting: No. 194—195, a tutor's account of the follies of his pupil: No. 197—198, legacy-hunting: He has given a specimen of his nice observation of the mere external appearances of life, in the following passage in No. 179, against affectation, that frequent and most disgusting quality: "He that stands to contemplate the crowds that fill the streets of a populous city will see many passengers, whose air and motions it will be difficult to behold without contempt and laughter: but if he examine what are the appearances that thus powerfully excite his risibility, he will find among them neither poverty nor disease, nor any involuntary or painful defect. The disposition to derision and insult is awakened by the softness of foppery, the swell of insolence, the liveliness of levity, or the solemnity of grandeur; by the sprightly trip, the stately walk,

[1] [These characters are alluded to in the conclusion of the 188th Rambler, but so slightly that it seems hardly worth while to inquire whether the hints were furnished by observation or invention. As to the anecdote told of the elder Dr. Salter, it could have only been, as Mr. Chalmers observes, the repetition of some story of his youthful days, for he was 70 years of age before he became a member of the Ivy-lane club.—ED.]

the formal strut, and the lofty mien; by gestures intended to catch the eye, and by looks elaborately formed as evidences of importance."

Piozzi, p. 3. [Of the allegorical papers in the Rambler, Labour and Rest (No. 33) was Johnson's favourite; but Serotinus (No. 165), the man who returns late in life to receive honours in his native country, and meets with mortification instead of respect, was considered by him as a master-piece in the science of life and manners.]

Every page of the Rambler shows a mind teeming with classical allusion and poetical imagery: illustrations from other writers are, upon all occasions, so ready, and mingle so easily, in his periods, that the whole appears of one uniform vivid texture.

The style of this work has been censured by some shallow criticks as involved and turgid, and abounding with antiquated and hard words. So ill-founded is the first part of this objection, that I will challenge all who may honour this book with a perusal, to point out any English writer, whose language conveys his meaning with equal force and perspicuity[1]. It must, indeed, be allowed, that the structure of his sentences is expanded, and often has somewhat of the inversion of Latin; and that he delighted to express familiar thoughts in philosophical language; being in this the reverse of Socrates, who, it is said, reduced philosophy to the simplicity of common life. But let us attend to what he himself says in his concluding paper: "When common words were less pleasing to the ear, or less distinct in their signification, I have

[1] Yet his style did not escape the harmless shafts of pleasant humour; for the ingenious Bonnell Thornton published a mock Rambler in the Drury-lane Journal. [And Mr. Murphy, in commenting on this passage, quotes the witty observation of Dryden: "If so many foreign words are poured in upon us, it looks as if they were designed not to assist the natives but to conquer them." *Life*, p. 157.—ED.]

familiarized the terms of philosophy, by applying them to popular ideas." And, as to the second part of this objection, upon a late careful revision of the work, I can with confidence say, that it is amazing how few of those words, for which it has been unjustly characterised, are actually to be found in it; I am sure not the proportion of one to each paper[1]. This idle charge has been echoed from one babbler to another, who have confounded Johnson's Essays with Johnson's Dictionary; and because he thought it right in a lexicon of our language to collect many words which had fallen into disuse, but were supported by great authorities, it has been imagined that all of these have been interwoven into his own compositions. That some of them have been adopted by him unnecessarily, may, perhaps, be allowed; but, in general, they are evidently an advantage, for without them his stately ideas would be confined and cramped. "He that thinks with more extent than

[1] [Mr. Boswell's zeal carries him too far: Johnson's style, especially in the Rambler, is frequently turgid, even to ridicule; but he has been too often censured with a malicious flippancy, which Boswell may be excused for resenting; and even graver critics have sometimes treated him with inconsiderate injustice; for instance,—The Rev. Dr. Burrowes (now Dean of Cork), in an "*Essay on the Style of Dr. Johnson*," published in the first volume of the *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy* (1787), observes:

"Johnson says that he has rarely admitted any word not authorized by former writers; but where are we to seek authorities for 'resuscitation, orbity, volant, fatuity, divaricate, asinine, narcotic, vulnerary, empireumatic, papilionaceous,' and innumerable others of the same stamp, which abound in and *disgrace* his pages?—for 'obtund, disruption, sensory, or panoply,' all occurring in the short compass of a single essay in the Rambler;—or for 'cremation, horticulture, germination, and decussation,' within a few pages in his Life of Browne? They may be found, perhaps, in the works of former writers, but they make no part of the English language. They are the illegitimate offspring of learning by vanity." It is wonderful, that, instead of *asking* where these words were to be found, Dr. Burrowes did not think of referring to Johnson's own dictionary. He would have found good authorities for almost every one of them; for instance, for *resuscitation*, Milton and Bacon are quoted; for *volant*, Milton and Phillips; for *fatuity*, Arbuthnot; for *asinine*, Milton; for *narcotic* and *vulnerary*, Browne; for *germination*, Bacon, and so on. But although these authorities, which Dr. Burrowes might have found in the dictionary, are a sufficient answer to his question, let it be also observed, that many of these words were in use in more familiar authors than Johnson chose to quote, and that the majority of them are now become familiar, which is a sufficient proof that the English language has not considered them as *illegitimate*.—ED.]

Idler, No. 70. another, will want words of a larger meaning[1]." He once told me, that he had formed his style upon that of Sir William Temple, and upon "Chambers's Proposal for his Dictionary[2]." He certainly was mistaken; or if he imagined at first that he was imitating Temple, he was very unsuccessful[3]; for nothing can be more unlike than the simplicity of Temple, and the richness of Johnson. Their styles differ as plain cloth and brocade. Temple, indeed, seems equally erroneous in supposing that he himself had formed his style upon Sandys's View of the State of Religion in the Western Parts of the World.

The style of Johnson was, undoubtedly, much formed upon that of the great writers in the last century, Hooker, Bacon, Sanderson, Hakewill, and others; those "GIANTS," as they were well characterised by a GREAT PERSONAGE[4], whose authority,

[1] [This is a truism in the disguise of a sophism. "He that *thinks* with more extent will," no doubt, "want words of a larger *meaning*," but the *words themselves* may be plain and simple; the number of syllables, and *oro-rotundity* (if one may venture to use the expression) of the sound of a word can never add much, and may, in some cases, do injury to the meaning. What words were ever written of a larger meaning than the following, which, however, are the most simple and elementary that can be found—"*God said, Let there be light, and there was light!*" If we were to convert the proposition in the Idler, and say, that "he who thinks feebly needs bigger words to cover his inanity," we should be nearer the truth. But it must be admitted (as Mr. Boswell soon after observes) that Johnson (though he, in some of his works, pushed his peculiarities to an absurd extent) has been on the whole a benefactor to our language; he has introduced more dignity into our style, more regularity into our grammatical construction, and given a fuller and more sonorous sound to the march of our sentences and the cadence of our periods.—ED.]

[2] The paper here alluded to was, I believe, Chambers's Proposal for a second and improved edition of his Dictionary, which, I think, appeared in 1738. This proposal was probably in circulation in 1737, when Johnson first came to London.—MALONE.

[3] The authour appears to me to have misunderstood Johnson in this instance. He did not, I conceive, mean to say that, when he first began to write, he made Sir William Temple his model, with a view to form a style that should resemble his in all its parts; but that he formed his style on that of Temple and others, by taking from each those characteristic excellencies which were most worthy of imitation. See this matter further explained under April 9, 1778; where, in a conversation at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, Johnson himself mentions the particular improvements which Temple made in the English style. These, doubtless, were the objects of his imitation, so far as that writer was his model.—MALONE.

[4] [Here is an instance of the difficulty of explaining, after the lapse of a very few years, circumstances once of great notoriety. My learned and excellent

were I to name him, would stamp a reverence on the opinion.

[That Johnson owed his excellence as a writer to the divines and others of the last century, Sir John Hawkins attests, from having been the witness of his course of reading, and heard him declare his sentiments of their works. Hooker he admired for his logical precision, Sanderson for his acuteness, and Taylor for his amazing erudition; Sir Thomas Browne for his penetration, and Cowley for the ease and unaffected structure of his periods. The tinsel of Sprat disgusted him, and he could but just endure the smooth verbosity of Tillotson. Hammond and Barrow he thought involved; and of the latter that he was unnecessarily prolix[1].] Hawk. p. 271.

We may, with the utmost propriety, apply to his learned style that passage of Horace, a part of which he has taken as the motto to his Dictionary:

"Cum tabulis animum censoris sumet honesti;
Audebit quæcumque parùm splendoris habebunt
Et sine pondere erunt, et honore indigna ferentur,
Verba movere loco, quamvis invita recedant, Epist. l. ii. e. 2.

friend, the Bishop of Ferns, writes to me, "State that this *Great Personage* was his late majesty, George the Third. Every one knows it *now*, but who will know it fifty years hence?" No doubt the generality of readers have understood Mr. Boswell to refer to the late king; but, although the Editor has made very extensive inquiries amongst those who were most likely to know, he has not been able to discover any precise authority on this point, nor has he obtained even a conjecture as to the person to whom, or the occasion on which, his majesty used this happy expression. The Editor had formerly heard, but he does not recollect from whom, that when, on some occasion, the great divines of the 17th century were mentioned in the king's presence, his majesty said, "Yes—*there were* GIANTS *in those days*,"—in allusion to Genesis, vi. 4. It is to be observed, that Mr. Boswell, in his first edition, attributed this anecdote to "*one* whose authority, &c.:" in subsequent editions he changed "*one*" into "GREAT PERSONAGE." —Ed.]

[1] [The editor has thought it right to preserve the foregoing, as the evidence of an eye-witness to Johnson's course of reading; though it may be well doubted whether Sir J. Hawkins has preserved exactly the characteristic qualities which he attributed to these illustrious men. It is not easy to conceive how the erudition of Taylor or the penetration of Browne could have improved Johnson's *style;* nor is it likely that Johnson would have celebrated the eloquent and subtile Taylor for erudition alone, or the pious and learned Browne for mere penetration. Johnson's friend, Mr. Fitzherbert, said (see *post*, 8th April, 1775), that "it was not every man who could *carry* a *bon mot*;" certainly Hawkins was not a man likely to convey adequately Doctor Johnson's critical opinion of Jeremy Taylor.—Ed.]

Epist. l. ii. c. 2.

Et versentur adhuc intra penetralia Vestæ.
Obscurata diu populo bonus eruet, atque
Proferet in lucem speciosa vocabula rerum,
Quæ priscis memorata Catonibus atque Cethegis,
Nunc situs informis premit et deserta vetustas:
Adsciscet nova, quæ genitor produxerit usus:
Vehemens, et liquidus, puroque simillimus amni,
Fundet opes Latiumque beabit divite linguâ."

To so great a master of thinking, to one of such vast and various knowledge as Johnson, might have been allowed a liberal indulgence of that licence which Horace claims in another place:

De Arte Poetica.

"——————— Si forté necesse est
Indiciis monstrare recentibus abdita rerum,
Fingere cinctutis non exaudita Cethegis
Continget, dabiturque licentia sumpta pudenter:
Et nova fictaque nuper habebunt verba fidem, si
Græco fonte cadant, parcè detorta. Quid autem
Cæcilio Plautoque dabit Romanus, ademptum
Virgilio Varioque? Ego cur, acquirere pauca
Si possum, invideor; cum lingua Catonis et Enni
Sermonem patrium ditaverit, et nova rerum
Nomina protulerit? Licuit, semperque licebit
Signatum præsente notâ producere nomen."

Yet Johnson assured me, that he had not taken upon him to add more than four or five words to the English language, of his own formation; and he was very much offended at the general licence by no means "modestly taken" in his time, not only to coin new words, but to use many words in senses quite different from their established meaning, and those frequently very fantastical.

Sir Thomas Browne, whose Life Johnson wrote, was remarkably fond of Anglo-Latin diction; and to his example we are to ascribe Johnson's sometimes indulging himself in this kind of phraseology [1].

[1] The observation of his having imitated Sir Thomas Browne has been made by many people; and lately it has been insisted on, and illustrated by a variety of quotations from Browne, in one of the popular Essays written by the Rev. Mr. Knox, master of Tunbridge-school, whom I have set down in my list of those who have sometimes not unsuccessfully imitated Dr. Johnson's style.

Johnson's comprehension of mind was the mould for his language. Had his conceptions been narrower, his expression would have been easier. His sentences have a dignified march; and it is certain, that his example has given a general elevation to the language of his country, for many of our best writers have approached very near to him; and, from the influence which he has had upon our composition, scarcely any thing is written now that is not better expressed than was usual before he appeared to lead the national taste.

This circumstance, the truth of which must strike every critical reader, has been so happily enforced by Mr. Courtenay, in his "Moral and Literary Character of Dr. Johnson," that I cannot prevail on myself to withhold it, notwithstanding his, perhaps, too great partiality for one of his friends:

"By nature's gifts ordain'd mankind to rule,
He, like a Titian, form'd his brilliant school;
And taught congenial spirits to excel,
While from his lips impressive wisdom fell.
Our boasted Goldsmith felt the sovereign sway;
From him derived the sweet, yet nervous lay.
To Fame's proud cliff he bade our Raffaelle rise:
Hence Reynolds' pen with Reynolds' pencil vies.
With Johnson's flame melodious Burney glows,
While the grand strain in smoother cadence flows.
And you, Malone, to critick learning dear,
Correct and elegant, refined though clear,
By studying him, acquired that classick taste,
Which high in Shakspeare's fane thy statue placed.
Near Johnson Steevens stands, on scenick ground,
Acute, laborious, fertile, and profound.
Ingenious Hawkesworth to this school we owe,
And scarce the pupil from the tutor know.
Here early parts accomplish'd Jones sublimes,
And science blends with Asia's lofty rhymes;
Harmonious Jones! who in his splendid strains
Sings Camdeo's sports, on Agra's flowery plains,
In Hindu fictions, while we fondly trace
Love and the Muses, deck'd with Attick grace.

Amid these names can Boswell be forgot,
Scarce by North Britons now esteem'd a Scot[1];
Who to the sage devoted from his youth,
Imbibed from him the sacred love of truth;
The keen research, the exercise of mind,
And that best art, the art to know mankind.—
Nor was his energy confined alone
To friends around his philosophick throne;
Its influence wide improved our letter'd isle,
And lucid vigour mark'd the general style:
As Nile's proud waves, swoln from their oozy bed,
First o'er the neighbouring meads majestick spread;
Till gathering force, they more and more expand,
And with new virtue fertilise the land."

Johnson's language, however, must be allowed to be too masculine for the delicate gentleness of female writing. His ladies, therefore, seem strangely formal, even to ridicule; and are well denominated by the names which he has given them, as Misella, Zozima, Properantia, Rhodoclia[2].

It has of late been the fashion to compare the style of Addison and Johnson, and to depreciate[3], I think, very unjustly, the style of Addison as nerveless and feeble, because it has not the strength and energy of

[1] The following observation in Mr. Boswell's *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides* may sufficiently account for that gentleman's being "now scarcely esteemed a Scot" by many of his countrymen: "If he (Dr. Johnson) was particularly prejudiced against the Scots, it was because they were more in his way; because he thought their success in England rather exceeded the due proportion of their real merit; and because he could not but see in them that nationality, which, I believe, no liberal-minded Scotchman will deny." Mr. Boswell, indeed, is so free from national prejudices, that he might with equal propriety have been described as—

"Scarce by *South* Britons now esteem'd a Scot."

COURTENAY.

[2] [Mr. Burke said pleasantly, that "his ladies were all *Johnsons in petticoats*." Mr. Murphy (*Life*, p. 159) seems to pass somewhat of the same censure on the letter in the 12th Rambler, from a young woman that wants a place: yet—such is the uncertainty of criticism—this is the paper quoted by Mr. Chalmers, as an example of such ease and familiarity of style, which made him almost doubt whether it was Johnson's. *Brit. Ess.* vol. xix. p. 44.—ED.]

[3] [Where did Mr. Boswell discover this, except in Sir J. Hawkins, who says (p. 270), with more than usual absurdity and bad taste, "I find an opinion gaining ground, not much to the advantage of Mr. Addison's style, the characteristics of which are feebleness and inanity—I speak of *that alone*, for his sentiments are excellent and his humour exquisite." What the worthy knight meant by *inanity*, as applied to Addison's *style*, is not worth inquiring.—ED.]

that of Johnson. Their prose may be balanced like the poetry of Dryden and Pope. Both are excellent, though in different ways. Addison writes with the ease of a gentleman. His readers fancy that a wise and accomplished companion is talking to them; so that he insinuates his sentiments and taste into their minds by an imperceptible influence. Johnson writes like a teacher. He dictates to his readers as if from an academical chair. They attend with awe and admiration; and his precepts are impressed upon them by his commanding eloquence. Addison's style, like a light wine, pleases every body from the first. Johnson's, like a liquor of more body, seems too strong at first, but, by degrees, is highly relished; and such is the melody of his periods, so much do they captivate the ear, and seize upon the attention, that there is scarcely any writer, however inconsiderable, who does not aim, in some degree, at the same species of excellence. But let us not ungratefully undervalue that beautiful style, which has pleasingly conveyed to us much instruction and entertainment. Though comparatively weak, opposed to Johnson's Herculean vigour, let us not call it positively feeble. Let us remember the character of his style, as given by Johnson himself: "What he attempted, he performed; he is *never feeble*, and he did not wish to be energetick; he is never rapid, and he never stagnates. His sentences have neither studied amplitude, nor affected brevity; his periods, though not diligently rounded, are voluble and easy[1]. Whoever wishes to attain an

[1] When Johnson showed me a proof-sheet of the character of Addison, in which he so highly extols his style, I could not help observing, that it had not been his own model, as no two styles could differ more from each other. "Sir, Addison had his style, and I have mine." When I ventured to ask him, whether the difference did not consist in this, that Addison's style was full of idioms, colloquial phrases, and proverbs; and his own more strictly grammatical and free from such phraseology and modes of speech as can never be literally translated or understood by foreigners; he allowed the discrimination to be just. Let any one who doubts it, try to translate one of Addison's Spectators into Latin,

English style, familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison [1]."

Piozzi, p. 153. [His manner of criticising and commending Addison's prose was the same in conversation as we read it in his printed strictures, and many of the expressions used have been heard to fall from him on common occasions. It was notwithstanding observable enough (or Mrs. Piozzi fancied so), that he never liked, though he always thought fit, to praise it; and his praises resembled those of a man who extols the superiour elegance of high-painted porcelain, while he himself always chooses to eat off *plate*. She told him so one day, and he neither denied it nor appeared displeased.

Piozzi, p. 45. But his opinion of Steele's essays was not so favourable. "They are too thin (said he) for an Englishman's taste: mere superficial observations on life and manners, without erudition enough to make them keep, like the light French wines, which turn sour with standing awhile, for want of *body*, as we call it [2]."]

Though the Rambler was not concluded till the year 1752, I shall, under this year, say all that I have to observe upon it. Some of the translations of the mottos by himself are admirably done. He acknowledges to have received "elegant translations" of many of them from Mr. James Elphinston; and some are very happily translated by a Mr. *F. Lewis*, of whom I never heard more, except that Johnson

French, or Italian; and though so easy, familiar, and elegant, to an Englishman, as to give the intellect no trouble; yet he would find the transfusion into another language extremely difficult, if not impossible. But a Rambler, Adventurer, or Idler, of Johnson, would fall into any classical or European language, as easily as if it had been originally conceived in it.—BURNEY.

[1] I shall probably, in another work, maintain the merit of Addison's poetry, which has been very unjustly depreciated.—BOSWELL. [Mr. Boswell never, that the editor knows of, executed this intention.—ED.]

[2] [This illustration (which Mr. Boswell has applied to Addison and Johnson) seems, in this instance, not very happy, and still less just. Steele's Essays have outlived a century, and are certainly not yet sour to any good taste.—ED.]

thus described him to Mr. Malone: "Sir, he lived in London, and hung loose upon society[1]." The concluding paper of his Rambler is at once dignified and pathetick. I cannot, however, but wish that he had not ended it with an unnecessary Greek verse, translated[2] also into an English couplet:

"Αὐτῶν ἐκ μακάρων ἀντάξιος εἴη ἀμοιβή.
Celestial powers! that piety regard,
From you my labours wait their last reward."

It is too much like the conceit of those dramatick poets, who used to conclude each act with a rhyme; and the expression in the first line of his couplet, "*Celestial powers*," though proper in Pagan poetry, is ill suited to Christianity, with "a conformity" to which he consoles himself. How much better would it have been to have ended with the prose sentence, "I shall never envy the honours which wit and learning obtain in any other cause, if I can be numbered among the writers who have given ardour to virtue, and confidence to truth."

His friend Dr. Birch being now engaged in preparing an edition of Ralegh's smaller pieces, Dr. Johnson wrote the following letter to that gentleman:

"TO DR. BIRCH.

"Gough Square, May 12, 1750.

"SIR,—Knowing that you are now preparing to favour the publick with a new edition of Ralegh's miscellaneous pieces, I

[1] In the *Gentleman's Magazine* for October, 1752, p. 468, he is styled "the Rev. Francis Lewis, of Chiswick." The late Lord Macartney, while he resided at Chiswick, at my request, made some inquiry concerning him at that place, but no intelligence was obtained.

The translations of the mottos supplied by Mr. Elphinstone appeared first in the Edinburgh edition of the Rambler, and in some instances were revised and improved, probably by Johnson, before they were inserted in the London octavo edition. The translations of the mottos affixed to the first thirty numbers of the Rambler were published, from the Edinburgh edition, in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for September, 1750, before the work was collected into volumes.—MALONE. [Those of the next twenty-seven numbers, marked with the initials of the translators, are to be found in the same magazine for October, 1752, with two admirable improvements of the former translation of the mottos to Nos. 7 and 11, one of which is already quoted, *ante*, p. 109.—ED.]

[2] Not in the original edition, in folio.—MALONE.

have taken the liberty to send you a manuscript, which fell by chance within my notice. I perceive no proofs of forgery in my examination of it; and the owner tells me, that, as *he* has heard, the handwriting is Sir Walter's. If you should find reason to conclude it genuine, it will be a kindness to the owner, a blind person[1], to recommend it to the booksellers. I am, sir, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

His just abhorrence of Milton's political notions was ever strong. But this did not prevent his warm admiration of Milton's great poetical merit, to which he has done illustrious justice, beyond all who have written upon the subject. And this year he not only wrote a Prologue, which was spoken by Mr. Garrick before the acting of Comus at Drury-lane theatre, for the benefit of Milton's grand-daughter, but took a very zealous interest in the success of the charity. On the day preceding the performance, he published the following letter in the "General Advertiser," addressed to the printer of that paper:

"SIR,—That a certain degree of reputation is acquired merely by approving the works of genius, and testifying a regard to the memory of authours, is a truth too evident to be denied; and therefore to ensure a participation of fame with a celebrated poet, many, who would, perhaps, have contributed to starve him when alive, have heaped expensive pageants upon his grave[2].

"It must, indeed, be confessed, that this method of becoming known to posterity with honour is peculiar to the great, or at least to the wealthy; but an opportunity now offers for almost every individual to secure the praise of paying a just regard to the illustrious dead, united with the pleasure of doing good to the living. To assist industrious indigence, struggling with distress, and debilitated by age, is a display of virtue, and an acquisition of happiness and honour.

"Whoever, then, would be thought capable of pleasure in reading the works of our incomparable Milton, and not so destitute of gratitude as to refuse to lay out a trifle in rational and

[1] Mrs. Williams is probably the person meant.—BOSWELL.

[2] Alluding probably to Mr. Auditor Benson, [who erected a monument to Milton in Westminster Abbey.—ED.] See the Dunciad, b. iv.—MALONE.

elegant entertainment, for the benefit of his living remains, for the exercise of their own virtue, the increase of their reputation, and the pleasing consciousness of doing good, should appear at Drury-lane theatre to-morrow, April 5, when Comus will be performed for the benefit of Mrs. Elizabeth Foster, grand-daughter to the authour[1], and the only surviving branch of his family.

"N. B. There will be a new prologue on the occasion, written by the authour of Irene, and spoken by Mr. Garrick; and, by particular desire, there will be added to the Masque a dramatick satire, called Lethe, in which Mr. Garrick will perform."

In 1751 we are to consider him as carrying on both his Dictionary and Rambler. But he also wrote "The Life of Cheynel*," in the miscellany called "The Student;" and the Rev. Dr. Douglas having with uncommon acuteness clearly detected a gross forgery and imposition upon the publick by William Lauder, a Scotch schoolmaster, who had, with equal impudence and ingenuity, represented Milton as a plagiary from certain modern Latin poets, Johnson, who had been so far imposed upon as to furnish a Preface and Postscript to his work, now dictated a letter for Lauder, addressed to Dr. Douglas, acknowledging his fraud in terms of suitable contrition[2].

[1] [She survived this benefit but three years, and died without issue. It is remarkable that none of our great, and few of our second-rate poets have left posterity.—Ed.]

[2] Lest there should be any person, at any future period, absurd enough to suspect that Johnson was a partaker in Lauder's fraud, or had any knowledge of it, when he assisted him with his masterly pen, it is proper here to quote the words of Dr. Douglas, now Bishop of Salisbury, at the time when he detected the imposition. "It is to be hoped, nay it is *expected*, that the elegant and nervous writer, whose judicious sentiments and inimitable style point out the authour of Lauder's Preface and Postscript, will no longer allow one to *plume himself with his feathers*, who appeareth so little to deserve assistance: an assistance which I am persuaded would never have been communicated, had there been the least suspicion of those facts which I have been the instrument of conveying to the world in these sheets." *Milton no Plagiary*, 2d edit. p. 78. And his lordship has been pleased now to authorise me to say, in the strongest manner, that there is no ground whatever for any unfavourable reflection against Dr. Johnson, who expressed the strongest indignation against Lauder.—Boswell. [See, however, *note* in p. 208.—Ed.]

[In the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1754, is a short account of a renewed

This extraordinary attempt of Lauder was no sudden effort. He had brooded over it for many years: and to this hour it is uncertain what his principal motive was, unless it were a vain notion of his superiority, in being able, by whatever means, to deceive mankind. To effect this, he produced certain passages from Grotius, Masenius, and others, which had a faint resemblance to some parts of the "Paradise Lost." In these he interpolated some fragments of Hog's Latin translation of that poem, alleging that the mass thus fabricated was the archetype from which Milton copied. These fabrications he published from time to time in the Gentleman's Magazine; and, exulting in his fancied success, he in 1750 ventured to collect them into a pamphlet, entitled "An Essay on Milton's Use and Imitation of the Moderns in his Paradise Lost." To this pamphlet Johnson wrote a Preface, in full persuasion of Lauder's honesty, and a Postscript recommending, in the most persuasive terms, a subscription for the relief of the grand-daughter of Milton, of whom he thus speaks: "It is yet in the power of a great people to reward the poet whose name they boast, and from their alliance to whose genius they claim some kind of superiority to every other nation of the earth; that poet, whose works may possibly be read when every other monument of British greatness shall be obliterated; to reward him, not with pictures or with medals, which, if he sees, he sees with contempt, but with tokens of gratitude, which he, perhaps, may even now consider as not

attack by Lauder on Milton's character, in a pamphlet entitled "The Grand Impostor detected, or Milton convicted of Forgery against King Charles I."—Mr. Chalmers thinks that this review was probably written by Johnson; but it is, on every account, very unlikely. The article is trivial, and seems to be written neither in the style nor sentiments of Johnson.—ED.]

Lauder afterwards went to Barbadoes, where he died very miserably about the year 1771.—MALONE.

unworthy the regard of an immortal spirit." Surely this is inconsistent with "enmity towards Milton," which Sir John Hawkins imputes to Johnson upon this occasion, adding, "I could all along observe that Johnson seemed to approve not only of the design, but of the argument; and seemed to exult in a persuasion, that the reputation of Milton was likely to suffer by this discovery. That he was not privy to the imposture, I am well persuaded; that he wished well to the argument, may be inferred from the preface, which indubitably was written by Johnson." Is it possible for any man of clear judgement to suppose that Johnson, who so nobly praised the poetical excellence of Milton in a postscript to this very "discovery," as he then supposed it, could, at the same time, exult in a persuasion that the great poet's reputation was likely to suffer by it? This is an inconsistency of which Johnson was incapable; nor can any thing more be fairly inferred from the Preface, than that Johnson, who was alike distinguished for ardent curiosity and love of truth[1], was pleased with an investigation by which both were gratified. That he was actuated by these motives, and certainly by no unworthy desire to depreciate our great epick poet, is evident from his own words; for, after mentioning the general zeal of men of genius and literature, "to advance the honour, and distinguish the beauties of Paradise Lost," he says, "Among the inquiries to which this ardour of criticism has naturally given occasion, none is more obscure in itself, or more worthy of rational curiosity, than a retrospect of the progress of this mighty genius

[1] [But is it not extraordinary that Johnson, who had himself meditated a history of modern Latin poetry (see *ante*, p. 58), should not have shown his *curiosity and love of truth* by, at least, comparing Lauder's quotations with the original authors? It was, we might say, his duty to have done so, before he so far pronounced his judgment as to assist Lauder; and had he attempted but to verify a single quotation, he must have immediately discovered the fraud.—ED.]

in the construction of his work; a view of the fabrick gradually rising, perhaps, from small beginnings, till its foundation rests in the centre, and its turrets sparkle in the skies; to trace back the structure through all its varieties, to the simplicity of its first plan; to find what was first projected, whence the scheme was taken, how it was improved, by what assistance it was executed, and from what stores the materials were collected; whether its founder dug them from the quarries of Nature, or demolished other buildings to embellish his own[1]."—Is this the language of one who wishes to blast the laurels of Milton?

Hawk. p. 285, 286,287.

[Mrs. Lenox[2], a lady now well known in the literary world, had written a novel entitled "The Life of

[1] "Proposals (written evidently by Johnson) for printing the ADAMUS EXUL of Grotius, with a Translation and Notes by Wm. Lauder, A. M." *Gent. Mag.* 1747, vol. 17, p. 404.—MALONE.

[2] [Mrs. Charlotte Lenox was born in 1720. Her father, Colonel Ramsay, Lieutenant Governor of New York, sent her over to England at the age of fifteen; but, unfortunately, the relative to whose care she was consigned was either dead or in a state of insanity on Miss Ramsay's arrival. A lady who heard of, and pitied so extraordinary a disappointment, interested Lady Rockingham in the fate of Miss Ramsay; and the result was, that she was received into her ladyship's family, where she remained till she fancied that a gentleman who visited at the house had become enamoured of her; though she is said to have been very plain in her person. This fancied passion led her into some extravagances of vanity and jealousy, which terminated her residence with Lady Rockingham. Her moral character, however, was never impeached, and she obtained some countenance and protection from the Duchess of Newcastle; but was chiefly dependant for a livelihood on her own literary exertions. In 1747, she published a volume of poems, and became, probably about that time, known to Mr. Strahan, the printer, in consequence of which she became acquainted with and married a Mr. Lenox, who was in Mr. Strahan's employ, but in what capacity is not known. She next published, in 1751, the novel of Harriot Stuart, mentioned in the text, in which it is supposed she gave her own history. The Duchess of Newcastle honoured her by standing godmother to her first child, who was called Henrietta Holles, and did her the more substantial benefits of procuring for Mr. Lenox the place of tidewaiter in the customs, and for herself an apartment in Somerset-house. Nothing more is remembered of Mr. Lenox, except that he, at a later period of life, put forward some claim to a Scotish peerage. Mrs. Lenox lost her apartments by the pulling down of Somerset-house; and, in the latter part of her life, was reduced to great distress. Besides her acquaintance with Dr. Johnson (who was always extremely kind to her), and other literary characters, she had the good fortune to become acquainted, at Mr. Strahan's, with the late Right Hon. George Rose, who liberally assisted her in the latter years of her life—particularly in her last illness, and was at the expense of her burial in the beginning of January, 1804.

For most of the foregoing details, the editor is indebted to his friend the Right Hon. Sir George Rose, whose venerable mother still remembers Mrs. Lenox.—ED.]

Harriot Stuart," which in the spring of 1751 was ready for publication. One evening at the [Ivy-lane] club, Johnson proposed the celebrating the birth of Mrs. Lenox's first literary child, as he called her book, by a whole night spent in festivity. Upon his mentioning it to Sir J. Hawkins, he told him he had never sat up a whole night in his life; but Johnson continuing to press him, and saying, that he should find great delight in it, he, as did all the rest of our company, consented. The place appointed was the Devil tavern, and there, about the hour of eight, Mrs. Lenox and her husband, and a lady of her acquaintance, still [1785] living, as also the club, and friends to the number of near twenty, assembled. The supper was elegant, and Johnson had directed that a magnificent hot apple-pie should make a part of it, and this he would have stuck with bay leaves, because, forsooth, Mrs. Lenox was an authoress, and had written verses; and further, he had prepared for her a crown of laurel, with which, but not till he had invoked the muses by some ceremonies of his own invention, he encircled her brows. The night passed, as must be imagined, in pleasant conversation and harmless mirth, intermingled at different periods with the refreshments of coffee and tea. About five, Johnson's face shone with meridian splendour, though his drink had been only lemonade; but the far greater part of the company had deserted the colours of Bacchus, and were with difficulty rallied to partake of a second refreshment of coffee, which was scarcely ended when the day began to dawn. This phenomenon began to put them in mind of the reckoning; but the waiters were all so overcome with sleep, that it was two hours before a bill could be had, and it was not till near eight that the creaking of the street door gave the signal of departure.]

Hawk. p. 285, 286,287.

Rich. Cor. v. 5. p. 281.

["TO MR. RICHARDSON.

"March 9, 1750—1.

"DEAR SIR,—Though Clarissa wants no help from external splendour, I was glad to see her improved in her appearance, but more glad to find that she was now got above all fears of prolixity, and confident enough of success to supply whatever had been hitherto suppressed. I never indeed found a hint of any such defalcation, but I regretted it; for though the story is long, every letter is short.

"I wish you would add an *index rerum*, that when the reader recollects any incident, he may easily find it, which at present he cannot do, unless he knows in which volume it is told; for Clarissa is not a performance to be read with eagerness, and laid aside for ever; but will be occasionally consulted by the busy, the aged, and the studious; and therefore I beg that this edition, by which I suppose posterity is to abide, may want nothing that can facilitate its use.—I am, sir, yours, &c.

"S. JOHNSON."]

ED. [This proposition of an *index rerum* to a novel will appear extraordinary, but Johnson at this time appears to have been very anxious to cultivate the acquaintance of Richardson[1], who lived in an atmosphere of flattery, and Johnson found it necessary to fall into the fashion of the society.] [Mr. Northcote relates that Johnson introduced Sir Joshua Reynolds and his sister to Richardson, but hinted to them, at the same time, that if they wished to see the latter in good humour, they must expatiate on the excellencies of Clarissa[2]; [and Mrs. Piozzi tells us, that when talking of Richardson he once said, "You think I love flattery—and so I do; but a little too much always disgusts me: that fellow, Richardson, on the contrary, could not be contented to sail quietly down the stream of reputation without longing to taste the froth from every stroke of the oar."]

Life of Reynolds, p. 46.

Piozzi, p. 142.

In 1752 he was almost entirely occupied with his Dictionary. The last paper of his Rambler was pub-

[1] [See *post*, 18th Ap. 1778.—ED.]

[2] [See Mr. Langton's testimony to the same effect, *post*, 1780.—ED.]

lished March 21, this year; after which there was a cessation for some time of any exertion of his talents as an essayist. But, in the same year, Dr. Hawkesworth, who was his warm admirer, and a studious imitator of his style, and then lived in great intimacy with him, began a periodical paper, entitled "THE ADVENTURER," in connexion with other gentlemen, one of whom was Johnson's much-loved friend, Dr. Bathurst; and, without doubt, they received many valuable hints from his conversation, most of his friends having been so assisted in the course of their works.

[The curiosity of the reader [as to the several writers of the Adventurer] is, to a small degree, gratified by the last paper, which assigns to Dr. Joseph Warton such as have the signature Z., and leaves to Dr. Hawkesworth himself the praise of such as are without any. To the information there given, Sir John Hawkins adds, that the papers marked A. which are said to have come from a source that soon failed, were supplied by Dr. Bathurst, an original associate in the work, and those distinguished by the letter T. [the first of which is dated 3d March, 1753,] by Johnson, who received Hawk. p. 293. 319.

[1] Here the authour's memory failed him, for, according to the account given in a former page (see p. 177), we should here read March 17; but, in truth, as has been already observed, the Rambler closed on Saturday the *fourteenth* of March; at which time Mrs. Johnson was near her end, for she died on the following Tuesday, March 17. Had the concluding paper of that work been written on the day of her death, it would have been still more extraordinary than it is, considering the extreme grief into which the authour was plunged by that event. The melancholy cast of that concluding essay is sufficiently accounted for by the situation of Mrs. Johnson at the time it was written; and her death three days afterwards put an end to the paper.—MALONE. [Mr. Malone seems also to have fallen into some errors, from not adverting to the change of *style*. Johnson, at this period, used the *old style;* so that Mr. Boswell may have copied from some MS. note the date of the 2d of March as that on which the last Rambler was written, though it was published next day, viz. the 3d, O. S. or 14th, N. S.; and as Mrs. Johnson's death was on the 17th, O. S., or 28th, N. S., the Rambler was concluded a fortnight before that event; and was concluded because, as Dr. Johnson expressly says in the last number, "having supported it for *two years*, and multiplied his essays to six volumes, he determined to desist." It died therefore a natural death, though it is very likely that the loss of Mrs. Johnson would have stopped it, had it not been already terminated.—ED.]

Hawk. p. 293, 319. two guineas for every number that he wrote; a rate of payment which he had before adjusted in his stipulation for the Rambler, and was probably the measure of reward to his fellow-labourers.]

That there should be a suspension of his literary labours during a part of the year 1752, will not seem strange, when it is considered that soon after closing his Rambler, he suffered a loss which, there can be no doubt, affected him with the deepest distress. For on the 17th of March, O. S. his wife died. Why Sir John Hawkins should unwarrantably take upon him even to *suppose* that Johnson's fondness for her was *dissembled* (meaning simulated or assumed[1]), and to assert, that if it was not the case, "it was a lesson he had learned by rote," I cannot conceive; unless it proceeded from a want of similar feelings in his own breast. To argue from her being much older than Johnson, or any other circumstances, that he could not really love her, is absurd; for love is not a subject of reasoning, but of feeling, and therefore there are no common principles upon which one can persuade another concerning it. Every man feels for himself, and knows how he is affected by particular qualities in the person he admires, the impressions of which are too minute and delicate to be substantiated in language.

The following very solemn and affecting prayer was found after Dr. Johnson's decease, by his servant, Mr. Francis Barber, who delivered it to my worthy friend the Reverend Mr. Strahan, vicar of Islington, who at my earnest request has obligingly favoured me with a copy of it, which he and I compared with the original. I present it to the world as an un-

[1] [Mr. Boswell is a little unlucky in this criticism, as Johnson himself has in his Dictionary given to the word "*dissembled*" the same meaning in which it is here used by Hawkins. He adds, however, very justly, that such a use of it is erroneous.—ED.]

doubted proof of a circumstance in the character of my illustrious friend, which, though some, whose hard minds I never shall envy, may attack as superstitious, will I am sure endear him more to numbers of good men. I have an additional, and that a personal motive for presenting it, because it sanctions what I myself have always maintained and am fond to indulge:

"April 26, 1752, being after 12 at night of the 25th.

"O Lord! Governour of heaven and earth, in whose hands are embodied and departed Spirits, if thou hast ordained the Souls of the Dead to minister to the Living, and appointed my departed Wife to have care of me, grant that I may enjoy the good effects of her attention and ministration, whether exercised by appearance, impulses, dreams, or in any other manner agreeable to thy government. Forgive my presumption, enlighten my ignorance, and however meaner agents are employed, grant me the blessed influences of thy holy Spirit, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

What actually followed upon this most interesting piece of devotion by Johnson, we are not informed; but I, whom it has pleased God to afflict in a similar manner to that which occasioned it, have certain experience of benignant communication by dreams.

That his love for his wife was of the most ardent kind, and, during the long period of fifty years, was unimpaired by the lapse of time, is evident from various passages in the series of his Prayers and Meditations[1], published by the Rev. Mr. Strahan, as well as from other memorials, two of which I select, as

[1] [The originals of this publication are now deposited in Pembroke College. It is to be observed that they consist of a few little memorandum books, and a great number of separate scraps of paper, and bear no marks of having been arranged or intended for publication by Dr. Johnson. Each *prayer* is on a separate piece of paper, generally a sheet (but sometimes a fragment) of note paper. The *memoranda* and *observations* are generally in little books of a few leaves sewed together. This subject will be referred to hereafter; but it is even now important that the reader should recollect that Mr. Strahan's publication was not *prepared* by Dr. Johnson himself, but formed by the reverend gentleman out of the loose materials above mentioned.—ED.]

strongly marking the tenderness and sensibility of his mind.

"March 28, 1753. I kept this day as the anniversary of my Tetty's death, with prayer and tears in the morning. In the evening I prayed for her conditionally, if it were lawful."

"April 23, 1753. I know not whether I do not too much indulge the vain longings of affection; but I hope they intenerate my heart, and that when I die like my Tetty, this affection will be acknowledged in a happy interview, and that in the mean time I am incited by it to piety. I will, however, not deviate too much from common and received methods of devotion[1]."

Her wedding-ring, when she became his wife, was, after her death, preserved by him, as long as he lived, with an affectionate care, in a little round wooden

[1] [Miss Seward, with equal truth and taste, thus expresses herself concerning these and similar passages: "Those pharisaic meditations, with their *popish* prayers for old Tetty's soul; their contrite *parade* about lying in bed on a morning; drinking creamed tea on a fast day; snoring at sermons; and having omitted to ponder well Bel and the Dragon, and Tobit and his Dog." And in another letter she does not scruple to say that Mr. Boswell confessed to her his idea that Johnson was "a Roman Catholic in his heart." Miss Seward's credit is by this time so low that it is hardly necessary to observe how improbable it is that Mr. Boswell could have made any such confession. Dr. Johnson thought charitably of the Roman Catholics, and defended their religion from the coarse language of our political tests, which call it impious and idolatrous (*post*, 26th Oct. 1769); but he strenuously disclaimed all participation in the doctrines of that church (see *post*, 3d May, 1773; 5th April, 1776; 10th Oct. 1779; 3d June, 1784). Lady Knight (the mother of Miss Cornelia Knight, the accomplished author of Marcus Flaminius and other ingenious works) made the following communication to Mr. Hoole, which may be properly quoted on this point: "Dr. Johnson's political principles ran high, both in church and state: he wished power to the king and to the heads of the church, as the laws of England have established; but I know he disliked absolute power; and I am very sure of his disapprobation of the doctrines of the church of Rome; because about three weeks before we came abroad, he said to my Cornelia, 'you are going where the ostentatious pomp of church ceremonies attracts the imagination; but if they want to persuade you to change, you must remember, that by increasing your faith, you may be persuaded to become Turk.' If these were not the words, I have kept up to the express meaning." Mrs. Piozzi also says, "though beloved by all his Roman Catholic acquaintance, yet was Mr. Johnson a most unshaken *church-of-England* man; and I think, or at least I once *did* think, that a letter written by him to Mr. Barnard, the king's librarian, when he was in Italy collecting books, contained some very particular advice to his friend to be on his guard against the seductions of the church of Rome." And, finally—which may perhaps be thought more likely to express his real sentiments than even a more formal assertion—when it was proposed (see *post*, 30th April, 1773), that monuments of eminent men should in future be erected in St. Paul's, and when some one in conversation suggested to begin with Pope, Johnson observed, "Why, sir, as Pope was a Roman Catholic, I would not have his to be first."—ED.]

box, in the inside of which he pasted a slip of paper, thus inscribed by him in fair characters, as follows:

"*Ehcu!*
Eliz. Johnson,
Nupta Jul. 9°. 1736,
Mortua, eheu!
Mart. 17°. 1752[1]."

After his death, Mr. Francis Barber, his faithful servant, and residuary legatee, offered this memorial of tenderness to Mrs. Lucy Porter, Mrs. Johnson's daughter; but she having declined[2] to accept of it, he had it enamelled as a mourning ring for his old master, and presented it to his wife, Mrs. Barber, who now has it.

The state of mind in which a man must be upon the death of a woman whom he sincerely loves, had been in his contemplation many years before. In his IRENE, we find the following fervent and tender speech of Demetrius, addressed to his Aspasia:

"From those bright regions of eternal day,
Where now thou shin'st amongst thy fellow saints,
Array'd in purer light, look down on me!
In pleasing visions and assuasive dreams,
O! soothe my soul, and teach me how to lose thee."

I have, indeed, been told by Mrs. Desmoulins, who, before her marriage, lived for some time with Mrs. Johnson at Hampstead, that she indulged herself in country air and nice living, at an unsuitable expense, while her husband was drudging in the smoke of London, and that she by no means treated him with that complacency which is the most engaging quality

[1] It seems as if Dr. Johnson had been a little ashamed of the disproportion between his age and that of his wife, for neither in this inscription nor that over her grave, written thirty years later, does he mention her *age*, which was at her death *sixty-three*.—Ed.]

[2] [Offended perhaps, and not unreasonably, that she was not mentioned in Johnson's will.—Ed.

Piozzi, p. 112, 113, 115.

in a wife; [and when Mrs. Piozzi asked him if he ever disputed with his wife (that lady having heard that he had loved her passionately), "Perpetually (said he): my wife had a particular reverence for cleanliness, and desired the praise of neatness in her dress and furniture, as many ladies do, till they become troublesome to their best friends, slaves to their own besoms, and only sigh for the hour of sweeping their husbands out of the house as dirt and useless lumber: a clean floor is *so* comfortable, she would say sometimes, by way of twitting; till at last I told her, that I thought we had had talk enough about the *floor*, we would now have a touch at the *ceiling*." On another occasion Mrs. Piozzi heard him blame her for a fault many people have, of setting the miseries of their neighbours half unintentionally, half wantonly, before their eyes, showing them the bad side of their profession, situation, &c. He said, "she would lament the dependance of pupilage to a young heir, &c. and once told a waterman who rowed her along the Thames in a wherry, that he was no happier than a galley-slave, one being chained to the oar by authority, the other by want. I had, however (said he, laughing), the wit to get her daughter on my side always before we began the dispute[1]."]

But all this is perfectly compatible with his fondness for her, especially when it is remembered that he had a high opinion of her understanding, and that the impressions which her beauty, real or imaginary, had originally made upon his fancy, being continued by habit, had not been effaced, though she herself was doubtless much altered for the worse. [Garrick told Mr. Thrale, however, that she was a little painted

Piozzi, p. 113, 114.

[1] [This must have referred to some circumstances of early life, for it does not appear that Miss Porter ever resided with Dr. and Mrs. Johnson after they left Edial in 1737.—Ed.]

puppet, of no value at all, and quite disguised with affectation, full of odd airs of rural elegance; and he made out some comical scenes, by mimicking her in a dialogue he pretended to have overheard. Dr. Johnson told Mrs. Piozzi that her hair was eminently beautiful, quite *blonde* like that of a baby; but that she fretted about the colour, and was always desirous to dye it black, which he very judiciously hindered her from doing. A picture found of her at Lichfield was very pretty, and her daughter, Mrs. Lucy Porter, said it was like. The intelligence Mrs. Piozzi gained of her from Mr. Levett, was only perpetual illness and perpetual opium[1].] Piozzi, p. 113, 114.

The dreadful shock of separation took place in the night; and Dr. Johnson immediately despatched a letter to his friend, the Rev. Dr. Taylor, which, as Taylor told me, expressed grief in the strongest manner he had ever read; so that it is much to be regretted it has not been preserved[2]. The letter was brought to Dr. Taylor, at his house in the Cloysters, Westminster, about three in the morning; and as it signified an earnest desire to see him, he got up, and went to Johnson as soon as he was dressed, and found him in tears and in extreme agitation. After being a little while together, Johnson requested him to join with him in prayer. He then prayed extempore, as did Dr. Taylor; and thus by means of that piety which was ever his primary object, his troubled mind was, in some degree, soothed and composed.

[1] [Levett did not know Mrs. Johnson till the year 1746, when she was fifty-seven or eight years of age, and in very ill health.—Ed.]

[2] In the *Gentleman's Magazine* for February, 1794 (p. 100), was printed a letter pretending to be that written by Johnson on the death of his wife. But it is merely a transcript of the 41st number of "The Idler," on the death of a friend. A fictitious date, March 17, 1751, O. S. was added by some person, previously to this paper's being sent to the publisher of that miscellany, to give a colour to this deception.—Malone. [The date is 1752—the year of Mrs. Johnson's decease.—Ed.]

The next day he wrote as follows:

"TO THE REV. DR. TAYLOR.

"DEAR SIR,—Let me have your company and instruction. Do not live away from me. My distress is great.

"Pray desire Mrs. Taylor to inform me what mourning I should buy for my mother and Miss Porter, and bring a note in writing with you.

"Remember me in your prayers, for vain is the help of man. I am, dear sir, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON.

"March 18, 1752."

That his sufferings upon the death of his wife were severe, beyond what are commonly endured, I have no doubt, from the information of many who were then about him, to none of whom I give more credit than to Mr. Francis Barber, his faithful negro servant[1], who came into his family about a fortnight after the dismal event. These sufferings were aggravated by the melancholy inherent in his constitution; and although he probably was not oftener in the wrong than she was, in the little disagreements which sometimes troubled his married state, during which, he owned to me, that the gloomy irritability of his existence was more painful to him than ever, he might very naturally, after her death, be tenderly disposed to charge himself with slight omissions and offences, the sense of which would give him much uneasiness[2]. Accordingly we find, about a year after

[1] Francis Barber was born in Jamaica, and was brought to England in 1750 by Colonel Bathurst, father of Johnson's very intimate friend, Dr. Bathurst. He was sent, for some time, to the Rev. Mr. Jackson's school, at Barton, in Yorkshire. The colonel by his will left him his freedom, and Dr. Bathurst was willing that he should enter into Johnson's service, in which he continued from 1752 till Johnson's death, with the exception of two intervals; in one of which, upon some difference with his master, he went and served an apothecary in Cheapside, but still visited Dr. Johnson occasionally; in another, he took a fancy to go to sea. Part of the time, indeed, he was, by the kindness of his master, at a school in Northamptonshire, that he might have the advantage of some learning. So early and so lasting a connexion was there between Dr. Johnson and this humble friend.—BOSWELL.

[2] See his beautiful and affecting Rambler, No. 54.—MALONE.

her decease, that he thus addressed the Supreme Being:

"O Lord, who givest the grace of repentance, and hearest the prayers of the penitent, grant that by true contrition I may obtain forgiveness of all the sins committed, and of all duties neglected, in my union with the wife whom thou hast taken from me; for the neglect of joint devotion, patient exhortation, and mild instruction." Prayers and Med. p. 19.

The kindness of his heart, notwithstanding the impetuosity of his temper, is well known to his friends; and I cannot trace the smallest foundation for the following dark and uncharitable assertion by Sir John Hawkins: "The apparition of his departed wife was altogether of the terrifick kind, and hardly afforded him a hope that she was in a state of happiness." Hawk. p. 316. That he, in conformity with the opinion of many of the most able, learned, and pious Christians in all ages, supposed that there was a middle state[1] after death, previous to the time at which departed souls are finally received to eternal felicity, appears, I think, unquestionably from his devotions:

"And, O Lord, so far as it may be lawful in me, I commend to thy fatherly goodness *the soul of my departed wife;* beseeching thee to *grant* her whatever is best in her *present state,* and *finally to receive her to eternal happiness.*" Pr. and Med. p. 10.

But this state has not been looked upon with horrour, but only as less gracious.

He deposited the remains of Mrs. Johnson in the church of Bromley in Kent[2], to which he was pro-

[1] It does not appear that Johnson was fully persuaded that there was a middle state: his prayers being only *conditional*, i. e. if such a state existed.—MALONE. [This is not an exact view of the matter; the *condition* was that *it should be lawful to him* so to intercede; and in all his prayers of this nature he scrupulously introduces the humble limitation of "as far as it is lawful," or "as far as may be permitted, I *recommend*," &c.; but it is also to be observed that he *sometimes* prays that "the Almighty may *have had* mercy" on the departed, as if he believed the sentence to have been already pronounced.—ED.]

[2] A few months before his death, Johnson honoured her memory by the following epitaph, which was inscribed on her tombstone, in the church of Bromley:

bably led by the residence of his friend Hawkesworth at that place. The funeral sermon which he composed for her, which was never preached, but, having been given to Dr. Taylor, has been published since his death, is a performance of uncommon excellence, and full of rational and pious comfort to such as are depressed by that severe affliction which Johnson felt when he wrote it. When it is considered that it was written in such an agitation of mind, and in the short interval between her death and burial, it cannot be read without wonder.

Though Johnson's circumstances were at this time far from being easy, his humane and charitable disposition was constantly exerting itself. Mrs. Anna Williams, daughter of a very ingenious Welsh physician, and a woman of more than ordinary talents and literature, having come to London in hopes of being cured of a cataract in both her eyes, which afterwards ended in total blindness, was kindly received as a constant visitor at his house while Mrs. Johnson lived; and, after her death, having come under his roof in order to have an operation upon her eyes performed with more comfort to her than in lodgings, she had an apartment from him during the rest of her life, at all times when he had a house.

Hawk. p. 322-327. [Before the calamity of total deprivation of sight befel her, she, with the assistance of her father, had acquired a knowledge of the French and Italian languages, and had made great improvements in

Hic conduntur reliquiæ
ELIZABETHÆ
Antiquâ Jarvisiorum gente,
Peatlingæ, apud Leicestrienses, ortæ;
Formosæ, cultæ, ingeniosæ, piæ;
Uxoris, primis nuptiis, HENRICI PORTER,
Secundis, SAMUELIS JOHNSON:
Qui multum amatam, diuque defletam
Hoc lapide contexit.
Obiit Londini, Mense Mart.
A. D. MDCCLII.—MALONE.

literature, which, together with the exercise of her needle, at which she was very dexterous, as well after the loss of her sight as before, contributed to support her under her affliction, till a time when it was thought by her friends, that relief might be obtained from the hand of an operating surgeon. At the request of Dr. Johnson, Sir J. Hawkins went with her to a friend of his, Mr. Samuel Sharp, senior surgeon of Guy's hospital, who before had given him to understand that he would couch her gratis if the cataract was ripe, but upon making the experiment it was found otherwise, and that the crystalline humour was not sufficiently inspissated for the needle to take effect. She had been almost a constant companion of Mrs. Johnson for some time before her decease, but had never resided in the house; afterwards, for the convenience of performing the intended operation, Johnson took her home, and, upon the failure of that, kept her as the partner of his dwelling till he removed into chambers. Afterward, in 1766, upon his taking a house in Johnson's-court, in Fleet-street, he invited her thither, and in that, and his last house, in Bolt-court, she successively dwelt for the remainder of her life [1].

Hawk. p. 322—327.

[1] Lady Knight, in a paper already referred to (*ante*, p. 214), gives the following account of Mrs. Williams: "She was a person extremely interesting. She had an uncommon firmness of mind, a boundless curiosity, retentive memory, and strong judgment. She had various powers of pleasing. Her personal afflictions and slender fortune she seemed to forget, when she had the power of doing an act of kindness: she was social, cheerful, and active, in a state of body that was truly deplorable. Her regard to Dr. Johnson was formed with such strength of judgment and firm esteem, that her voice never hesitated when she repeated his maxims, or recited his good deeds; though upon many other occasions her want of sight had led her to make so much use of her ear, as to affect her speech.

"Mrs. Williams was blind before she was acquainted with Dr. Johnson.—She had many resources, though none very great. With the Miss Wilkinsons she generally passed a part of the year, and received from them presents, and from the first who died, a legacy of clothes and money. The last of them, Mrs. Jane, left her an annual rent; but from the blundering manner of the will, I fear she never reaped the benefit of it. The lady left money to erect an hospital for ancient maids: but the number she had allotted being too great for the donation, the Doctor (Johnson) said, it would be better to expunge the word *maintain*, and put in to *starve* such a number of old maids. They asked him,

Hawk. p. 322—327.

The loss of her sight made but a small abatement of her cheerfulness, and was scarce any interruption of her studies. With the assistance of two female friends, she translated from the French of Père La Bletrie "the Life of the Emperor Julian [1]," and, in 1766, she published, by subscription, a quarto volume of miscellanies, in prose and verse, and thereby increased her little fund to three hundred pounds, which, being prudently invested, yielded an income that, under such protection as she experienced from Dr. Johnson, was sufficient for her support.

She was a woman of an enlightened understanding; plain, as it is called, in her person, and easily provoked to anger, but possessing, nevertheless, some excellent moral qualities, among which no one was more conspicuous than her desire to promote the welfare and happiness of others, and of this she gave a signal proof, by her solicitude in favour of an institution for the maintenance and education of

what name should be given it? he replied, 'Let it be called JENNY'S WHIM.' (The name of a well-known tavern near Chelsea, in former days.)

"Lady Phillips made her a small annual allowance, and some other Welsh ladies, to all of whom she was related. Mrs. Montagu, on the death of Mr. Montagu, settled upon her (by deed) ten pounds per annum.—As near as I can calculate, Mrs. Williams had about thirty-five or forty pounds a year. The furniture she used [in her apartment in Dr. Johnson's house] was her own; her expenses were small, tea and bread and butter being at least half of her nourishment. Sometimes she had a servant or char-woman to do the ruder offices of the house; but she was herself active and industrious. I have frequently seen her at work. Upon remarking one day her facility in moving about the house, searching into drawers, and finding books, without the help of sight, 'Believe me (said she), persons who cannot do these common offices without sight, did but little while they enjoyed that blessing.'—Scanty circumstances, bad health, and blindness, are surely a sufficient apology for her being sometimes impatient: her natural disposition was good, friendly, and humane."—MALONE.

[The following description of Mrs. Williams (at a later date) may be here introduced: "I see her now a pale, shrunken old lady, dressed in scarlet, made in the handsome French fashion of the time (1775), with a lace cap, with two stiffened projecting wings on the temples, and a black lace hood over it. Her temper has been recorded as marked with Welsh fire, and this might be excited by some of the meaner inmates of the upper floors [of Dr. Johnson's house]; but her gentle kindness to me I never shall forget, or think consistent with a bad temper. I know nobody from whose discourse there was a better chance of deriving high ideas of moral rectitude."—*Miss Hawkins's Memoirs*, vol. 2, p. 152.—ED.]

[1] See it mentioned in Nichols's Life of Bowyer.

poor deserted females in the parish of St. Sepulchre, London, supported by the voluntary contributions of ladies, and, as the foundation-stone of a fund for its future subsistence, she bequeathed to it the whole of the little which she had been able to accumulate. To the endowments and qualities here ascribed to her, may be added, a larger share of experimental prudence than is the lot of most of her sex. Johnson, in many exigences, found her an able counsellor, and seldom showed his wisdom more than when he hearkened to her advice. In return, she received from his conversation the advantages of religious and moral improvement, which she cultivated so, as in a great measure to smooth the constitutional asperity of her temper. When these particulars are known, this intimacy, which began with compassion, and terminated in a friendship that subsisted till death dissolved it, will be easily accounted for. Hawk. p. 322—327.

[Mrs. Chapone, in one of her letters, gives an interesting account of her meeting Johnson and Miss Williams at Richardson's country-house, near Fulham, about this time. ED.

"MRS. CHAPONE TO MISS CARTER.

"10th July, 1752. Chap. Works, vol. i. p. 72.

"We had a visit, whilst at Northend, from your friend Mr. Johnson and poor Mrs. Williams. I was charmed with his behaviour to her, which was like that of a fond father to his daughter. She seemed much pleased with her visit; showed very good sense, with a great deal of modesty and humility; and so much patience and cheerfulness under her misfortune, that it doubled my concern for her. Mr. Johnson was very communicative and entertaining, and did me the honour to address most of his discourse to me. I had the assurance to dispute with him on the subject of human malignity, and wondered to hear a man, who, by his actions, shows so much benevolence, maintain that the human heart is naturally malevolent, and that all the benevolence we see in the few who are good is acquired by reason and religion. You may believe I entirely disagreed

with him, being, as you know, fully persuaded that benevolence, or the love of our fellow-creatures, is as much a part of our natures as self-love; and that it cannot be suppressed or extinguished without great violence from the force of other passions. I told him, I suspected him of these bad notions from some of his Ramblers, and had accused him to you; but that you had persuaded me I had mistaken his sense. To which he answered, that if he had betrayed such sentiments in the Ramblers, it was without design; for that he believed that the doctrine of human malevolence, though a true one, is not a useful one, and ought not to be published to the world. Is there any truth that would not be useful, or that should not be known?"]

Hawk. p. 322—327. [By some papers, in the hands of Sir John Hawkins, it seems that, notwithstanding Johnson was paid for writing the Rambler, he had a remaining interest in the copy-right of that paper, which about this time he sold. The produce thereof, the pay he was receiving for his papers in the Adventurer[1], and the fruits of his other literary labours, had now exalted him to such a state of comparative[2] affluence, as, in his judgment, made a man-servant necessary. Soon after the decease of Mrs. Johnson, the father of Dr. Bathurst arrived in England, from Jamaica, and brought with him a negro-servant, a native of that island, whom he caused to be baptized, and named Francis Barber, and sent for instruction to Burton-upon-Tees, in Yorkshire. Upon the decease of Captain Bathurst (for so he was called), Francis went to live with his son, who willingly parted with him to Johnson. The uses for which he was intended to serve this his last master were not very apparent, for Diogenes himself never wanted a servant less than he seemed to do.

[1] [Mr. Boswell states on evidence, which (however improbable the fact) it is hard to resist, that Johnson resigned to Dr. Bathurst some, if not all, the profits of the Adventurer, which at most were two guineas a paper for about thirty papers.—Ed.]

[2] [This is hardly consistent with all the other accounts, which lead to a belief that Johnson was, from the death of his wife in 1752, to the time of his pension in 1762, in very narrow circumstances. He most probably was induced to take the negro by charity and his love for Dr. Bathurst.—Ed.]

The great bushy wig which, throughout his life, he affected to wear, by that closeness of texture which it had contracted and been suffered to retain was ever nearly as impenetrable by a comb as a quickset hedge; and little of the dust that had once settled on his outer garments was ever known to have been disturbed by the brush.] Hawk. p. 322—327.

From Mr. Francis Barber I have had the following authentick and artless account of the situation in which he found him recently after his wife's death: "He was in great affliction. Mrs. Williams was then living in his house, which was in Gough-square. He was busy with the Dictionary. Mr. Shiels, and some others of the gentlemen who had formerly written for him, used to come about him. He had then little for himself, but frequently sent money to Mr. Shiels[1] when in distress. The friends who visited him at that time were chiefly Dr. Bathurst, and Mr. Diamond, an apothecary in Cork-street, Burlington-gardens, with whom he and Mrs. Williams generally dined every Sunday. There was a talk of his going to Iceland with him, which would probably have happened, had he lived. There were also Mr. Cave, Dr. Hawkesworth, Mr. Ryland, merchant on Tower-hill, Mrs. Masters[2], the poetess, who lived with Mr. Cave, Mrs. Carter, and sometimes Mrs. Macaulay[3]; also, Mrs. Gardiner, wife of a tallow-chandler, on Snow-hill, not in the learned way, but a worthy good woman[4]; Mr. (now Sir Joshua) Reynolds; Mr. Miller,

[1] [See *ante*, p. 161.—Ed.]

[2] [Mary Masters published a small volume of poems about 1738, and, in 1755—"*Familiar Letters and Poems*," in octavo. She is supposed to have died about 1759.—Ed.]

[3] [Catherine Sawbridge, sister of Mrs. Alderman Sawbridge, was born in 1733; but it was not till 1760 that she was married to Dr. Macaulay, a physician; so that Barber's account was, in respect to her, incorrect, either in date or name. She was married a second time, in 1778, to a Mr. Graham, with no increase of respectability. She died in 1791.—Ed.]

[4] [With this good woman, who was introduced to him by Mrs. Masters, he kept up a constant intercourse, and remembered her in his will, by the bequest of a book. See *post*, Nov. 1783.—Ed.]

Mr. Dodsley, Mr. Bouquet, Mr. Payne, of Paternoster-row, booksellers; Mr. Strahan, the printer; the Earl of Orrery [1], Lord Southwell [2], Mr. Garrick."

Many are, no doubt, omitted in this catalogue of his friends, and in particular, his humble friend Mr. Robert Levet, an obscure practiser in physick amongst the lower people, his fees being sometimes very small sums, sometimes whatever provisions his patients could afford him; but of such extensive practice in that way, that Mrs. Williams has told me his walk was from Houndsditch to Marybone. It appears, from Johnson's diary, that their acquaintance commenced about the year 1746; and such was Johnson's predilection for him, and fanciful estimation of his moderate abilities, that I have heard him say he should not be satisfied, though attended by all the college of physicians, unless he had Mr. Levet with him. Ever since I was acquainted with Dr. Johnson, and many years before, as I have been assured by those who knew him earlier, Mr. Levet had an apartment in his house, or his chambers, and waited upon him every morning, through the whole course of his late and tedious breakfast. He was of a strange grotesque appearance, stiff and formal in his manner, and seldom said a word while any company was present [3].

The circle of his friends, indeed, at this time was

[1] [John Boyle, born in 1707; educated first under the private tuition of Fenton the poet, and afterwards, at Westminster school, and Christ Church College, Oxford; succeeded his father as fifth Earl of Orrery in 1737; D. C. L. of Oxford in 1743; F. R. S. in 1750; and, on the death of his cousin, in 1753, fifth Earl of Corke. He published several works, but the only original one of any note is his *Life of Swift*, written with great professions of friendship, but in fact with considerable severity towards the dean. Lord Orrery's acquaintance may have tended to increase Johnson's aversion to Swift. Lord Orrery's estate was much encumbered, and his circumstances were consequently embarrassed. Mr. Tyers intimates (*Biog. Sk.* p. 7) that, *if it had been in his power*, Lord Orrery would have afforded Johnson pecuniary assistance.—Ed.]

[2] [Thomas, second Lord Southwell, F. R. S. born 1698, succeeded his father in 1720, and died 1766.—Ed.]

[3] A more particular account of this person may be found in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for February, 1785. It originally appeared in the *St. James's Chronicle*, and, I believe, was written by the late George Steevens, Esq.—Malone.

extensive and various, far beyond what has been generally imagined[1]. To trace his acquaintance with each particular person, if it could be done, would be a task, of which the labour would not be repaid by the advantage. But exceptions are to be made; one of which must be a friend so eminent as Sir Joshua Reynolds, who was truly his *dulce decus*, and with whom he maintained an uninterrupted intimacy to the last hour of life. When Johnson lived in Castle-street, Cavendish-square, he used frequently to visit two ladies, who lived opposite to him[2], Miss Cotterells, daughters of Admiral Cotterell[3]. Reynolds[4] used also to visit there, and thus they met. Mr. Reynolds, as I have observed above, had, from the first reading of his "Life of Savage," conceived a

[1] [Mr. Murphy, who is, as to this period, better authority than Mr. Boswell, says, "It was late in life before he had the habit of mixing, otherwise than occasionally, with polite company; and Dr. Harwood has favoured me with the following memorandum, in Johnson's writing, made about this time, of certain visits which he was to make (perhaps on his return from Oxford in 1754), and which, as it contains the names of some of the highest and lowest of his acquaintance, is probably a list of nearly all his friends:

Visits to

Brodie	Gully	Ryland	Gregory
Fowke	Hawkesworth	Payne	Desmoulins
Taylor	Gardiner	Newberry	Lloyd
Elphinston	Drew	Bathurst	Sherrard.
Osborne	Lawrence	Grainger	
Garden[er]	Garrick	Baker	
Richardson	Robinson, sen.	Weston	
Strahan	Boyle	Millar	
Millar	Wilson	Craster	
Tonson	Henry	Simpson	
Dodsley	Tyers	Rose	
Reynolds	Hawkins.	Giffard.	
Lenox.			

ED.]

[2] [It might be inferred, from an expression or two in his letters to Baretti (see *post*, 1761 and 1762), that these ladies were connexions of his wife, but Dr. Harwood informs me, on the authority of Mrs. Pearson, that there was no relationship.—ED.]

[3] ["Captain Charles Cotterell retired totally from the service in July, 1747, being put, with a number of other gentlemen, on the superannuated list, with the rank and pay of a rear-admiral. He died in July, 1754." *Biog. Nav.*—ED.]

[4] [It would be naturally inferred from Mr. Boswell's account, that the acquaintance between Johnson and Sir Joshua took place so early as the time when the former resided in Castle-street. This can hardly have been the case. Reynolds, then a youth under age, passed the years 1741 and 1742 in London, but did not again revisit the metropolis till the end of 1752. (See *Northcote's Life*, p. 12, 31, and 32.) That the acquaintance did not commence on the first visit, is proved by its having occurred *after* the publication of the Life of Savage, which was in 1744. Barber also must have been in error when he described Reynolds as one of Johnson's intimates at the period of his wife's death.—ED.]

very high admiration of Johnson's powers of writing. His conversation no less delighted him; and he cultivated his acquaintance with the laudable zeal of one who was ambitious of general improvement. Sir Joshua, indeed, was lucky enough, at their very first meeting, to make a remark, which was so much above the common-place style of conversation, that Johnson at once perceived that Reynolds had the habit of thinking for himself. The ladies were regretting the death of a friend, to whom they owed great obligations; upon which Reynolds observed, "You have, however, the comfort of being relieved from a burden of gratitude." They were shocked a little at this alleviating suggestion, as too selfish; but Johnson defended it in his clear and forcible manner, and was much pleased with the *mind*, the fair view of human nature[1] which it exhibited, like some of the reflections of Rochefoucault. The consequence was, that he went home with Reynolds, and supped with him.

Sir Joshua told me a pleasant characteristical anecdote of Johnson about the time of their first acquaintance. When they were one evening together at the Miss Cotterells', the then Duchess of Argyle[2] and another lady of high rank came in. Johnson thinking that the Miss Cotterells were too much engrossed by them, and that he and his friend were neglected, as low company, of whom they were somewhat ashamed, grew angry; and resolving to shock their supposed pride, by making their great visitors imagine that his friend and he were low indeed, he ad-

[1] Johnson himself has a sentiment somewhat similar in his 87th Rambler: "There are minds so impatient of inferiority, that their gratitude is a species of revenge, and they return benefits, not because recompense is a pleasure, but because obligation is a pain."—J. BOSWELL. [This is, no doubt, "a somewhat similar sentiment;" but in the Rambler, Johnson mentions it with the censure it deserves; whereas, in the text, he is represented as applauding it. Such an observation is very little like the usual good manners, good nature, and good sense of Sir Joshua; and we cannot but suspect the authority, whatever it was, on which Boswell admitted this anecdote.—ED.]

[2] [Jane Warburton, second wife of John second Duke of Argyle. His Grace died in 1743. She survived till 1767.—ED.]

dressed himself in a loud tone to Mr. Reynolds, saying, "How much do you think you and I could get in a week, if we were to *work as hard* as we could?" as if they had been common mechanicks.

[Of Dr. Bathurst, who stands first in the foregoing list of his friends, Dr. Johnson told Mrs. Piozzi that he loved "Dear, dear Bathurst, better than he ever loved any human creature;" and it was on him that he bestowed the singular eulogy of being a *good hater*. "Dear Bathurst," said he to Mrs. Piozzi, "was a man to my very heart's content; he hated a fool, and he hated a rogue, and he hated a whig—*he was a very good hater!*"] Piozzi, p. 14. Piozzi, p. 64.

Dr. Bathurst, though a physician of no inconsiderable merit, had not the good fortune to get much practice in London[1]. He was, therefore, willing to accept of employment abroad, and, to the regret of all who knew him, fell a sacrifice to the destructive climate, in the expedition against the Havannah. Mr. Langton recollects the following passage in a letter from Dr. Johnson to Mr. Beauclerk: "The Havannah is taken;—a conquest too dearly obtained; for Bathurst died before it.

"*Vix Priamus tanti totaque Troja fuit.*"

[It would seem from the two following letters that Dr. Bathurst left London and returned to the West Indies some years before the expedition against the Havannah; nor is his name to be found in the list of medical officers who accompanied the army from England; he probably, therefore, joined the expedition in the West Indies. Ed.

[1] [Sir John Hawkins is the authority on which these few and meagre particulars, relative to Dr. Bathurst, have been preserved. He adds, however, that Dr. Bathurst, before he went abroad, had been elected physician to an hospital (the Middlesex); but though Sir John tells so little (and that little not, it seems, very correctly) of the immediate subject of his notice, he gives a very amusing account of the various characters and fortunes of several of the medical profession in London about the middle of the last century. See his *Life of Johnson*, pp. 234, &c.—Ed.]

Harwood's Hist. Lich. p. 451.

"DR. BATHURST TO DR. JOHNSON.

"Barbadoes, 13 Jan. 1757.

"DEAR SIR,—The many acts of friendship and affection you have conferred upon me, so fully convince me of your being interested in my welfare, that even my present stupidity will not prevent my taking a pen in my hand to acquaint you that I am this instant arrived safe at Barbadoes, and I hope I may add, without having forgot all your lessons; and I am confident not without praying most fervently that the Supreme Being will enable me to deserve the approbation and friendship of so great and so good a man: alas! you little know how undeserving I am of the favours I have received from you. May health and happiness for ever attend you. Excuse my dropping my pen, for it is impossible that it should express the gratitude that is due to you, from your most affectionate friend, and most obliged servant, "RICHARD BATHURST.

"P.S. Let me trouble you with compliments to Miss Williams, to Mrs. Lennox, to Dr. Lawrence, and his family; in short, to all who shall be so obliging as to inquire after me; and if it will put you to no great inconvenience, let me beg that you will send to Mr. Scrocold and to Mr. Bathurst an account of my arrival at this place. I know you will call me a lazy dog, and, in truth, I deserve it; but I am afraid I shall never mend. I have indeed long known that I can love my friends without being able to tell them so. I find that I can write a long postscript, though I was not bred in Mr. Richardson's school: how easy is it to copy imperfections.—Is it not better to be blind than to be able to see our faults without being able to correct them? I must entreat you once more, my dear Mr. Johnson, to continue your forgiveness to me. Adieu, my dearest friend."

Harwood's Hist. Lich. p. 452.

"DR. BATHURST TO DR. JOHNSON.

"Jamaica, 18 March, 1757.

"DEAR SIR,—In compliance with my promise to acquaint you by the first conveyance of my arrival at this place, I have now taken a pen into my hand, but with what fear and dread it is impossible for me to express; the danger of offending the best of friends, to whom I stand indebted for all the little virtue and knowledge that I have, could scarcely compel me to it; and I now tremble to think that I shall not long be able to avoid the horrid imputation of ingratitude. I esteem, I honour, and I love you, and though I cannot write, I shall for ever be proud to acknowledge myself, your most obliged and most affectionate "RICHARD BATHURST.

"P. S. The inhabitants of this execrable region are much addicted to the making of promises which they never intend to perform, or I might flatter myself from the assurances of Mr. Joyce, the heir of Mr. Lamb, deceased, with a speedy return to England. Nothing, I think, but absolute want can force me to continue where I am. Let me request the continuance of your friendship, and kind wishes for a quick deliverance. Adieu."] Harwood's Hist. Dict. p. 452.

His acquaintance with Bennet Langton [1], esq., of Langton, in Lincolnshire, another much-valued friend, commenced soon after the conclusion of his Rambler, which that gentleman, then a youth [2], had read with so much admiration, that he came to London chiefly with a view of endeavouring to be introduced to its authour. By a fortunate chance, he happened to take lodgings in a house where Mr. Levet frequently visited; and having mentioned his wish to his landlady, she introduced him to Mr. Levet, who readily obtained Johnson's permission to bring Mr. Langton to him; as, indeed, Johnson, during the whole course of his life, had no shyness, real or affected, but was easy of access to all who were properly recommended, and even wished to see numbers at his *levee*, as his morning circle of company might, with strict propriety, be called. Mr. Langton

[1] [Mr. Langton was born about 1737, and entered, as Dr. Hall informs me, of Trinity College, Oxford, 7th July, 1757. So much of his history is told with that of Dr. Johnson's, that it is unnecessary to say more in this place, except that he was remarkable for his knowledge of Greek, and that he seems, at one time of his life, to have practised engineering as a profession. On Dr. Johnson's death, he succeeded him as professor of ancient literature in the Royal Academy. He died on the 10th December, 1801, and was buried at Southampton. The following description of his person and appearance later in life may be amusing. "O! that we could sketch him with his mild countenance, his elegant features, and his sweet smile, sitting with one leg twisted round the other, as if fearing to occupy more space than was equitable; his person inclining forward, as if wanting strength to support his height, and his arms crossed over his bosom, or his hands locked together on his knee; his oblong gold-mounted snuff-box, taken from the waistcoat pocket opposite his hand, and either remaining between his fingers or set by him on the table, but which was never used but when his mind was occupied on conversation; so soon as conversation began, the box was produced." *Miss Hawkins's Memoirs*, vol. 2, p. 282.—Ed.]

[2] [Mr. Langton was only fifteen when the Rambler was terminated.—Ed.]

was exceedingly surprised when the sage first appeared. He had not received the smallest intimation of his figure, dress, or manner. From perusing his writings, he fancied he should see a decent, well-dressed, in short, a remarkably decorous philosopher. Instead of which, down from his bedchamber, about noon, came, as newly risen, a huge uncouth figure, with a little dark wig, which scarcely covered his head, and his clothes hanging loose about him. But his conversation was so rich, so animated, and so forcible, and his religious and political notions so congenial with those in which Langton had been educated, that he conceived for him that veneration and attachment which he ever preserved. Johnson was not the less ready to love Mr. Langton for his being of a very ancient family; for I have heard him say, with pleasure, "Langton, sir, has a grant of free-warren from Henry the Second; and Cardinal Stephen Langton, in King John's reign, was of this family[1]."

Mr. Langton afterwards went to pursue his studies at Trinity College, Oxford, where he formed an acquaintance with his fellow-student, Mr. Topham Beauclerk[2]; who, though their opinions and modes of life were so different, that it seemed utterly improbable that they should at all agree, had so ardent a love of literature, so acute an understanding, such elegance of manners, and so well discerned the excellent qualities of Mr. Langton, a gentleman eminent

[1] [It is to be wondered that he did not also mention Bishop Langton, a distinguished benefactor to the cathedral of *Lichfield*, and who also had a grant of free-warren over his patrimonial inheritance, from Edward I.; the relationship might probably be as clearly traced in the one case as in the other. *Harwood's History of Lichfield*, p. 139.—Ed.]

[2] [Only son of Lord Sidney, third son of the first Duke of St. Albans. He was entered (as Dr. Hall informs me), of Trinity College, Oxford, 11th Nov. 1757, as "Topham, the son of Sidney of Windsor, Esq. aged seventeen;" and I find in the *Gent. Mag.* that the lady of Lord Sidney Beauclerk was on the "21st Dec. 1739, delivered of a son and heir,"—no doubt the person in question.—Ed.]

not only for worth and learning, but for an inexhaustible fund of entertaining conversation, that they became intimate friends.

Johnson, soon after this acquaintance began, passed a considerable time at Oxford. He at first thought it strange that Langton should associate so much with one who had the character of being loose, both in his principles and practice; but, by degrees, he himself was fascinated. Mr. Beauclerk's being of the St. Albans family, and having, in some particulars, a resemblance to Charles the Second, contributed, in Johnson's imagination, to throw a lustre upon his other qualities; and, in a short time, the moral, pious Johnson, and the gay, dissipated Beauclerk, were companions. "What a coalition! (said Garrick, when he heard of this:) I shall have my old friend to bail out of the round-house." But I can bear testimony that it was a very agreeable association. Beauclerk was too polite, and valued learning and wit too much, to offend Johnson by sallies of infidelity or licentiousness; and Johnson delighted in the good qualities of Beauclerk, and hoped to correct the evil. Innumerable were the scenes in which Johnson was amused by these young men. Beauclerk could take more liberty with him, than any body with whom I ever saw him; but, on the other hand, Beauclerk was not spared by his respectable companion, when reproof was proper. Beauclerk had such a propensity to satire, that at one time Johnson said to him, "You never open your mouth but with intention to give pain; and you have often given me pain, not from the power of what you said, but from seeing your intention." At another time applying to him, with a slight alteration, a line of Pope, he said,

"Thy love of folly, and thy scorn of fools—

Every thing thou dost shows the one, and every thing thou sayest the other." At another time he said to him, "Thy body is all vice, and thy mind all virtue." Beauclerk not seeming to relish the compliment, Johnson said, "Nay, sir, Alexander the Great, marching in triumph into Babylon, could not have desired to have had more said to him."

Johnson was some time with Beauclerk at his house at Windsor, where he was entertained with experiments in natural philosophy[1]. One Sunday, when the weather was very fine, Beauclerk enticed him, insensibly, to saunter about all the morning. They went into a church-yard, in the time of divine service, and Johnson laid himself down at his ease upon one of the tombstones. "Now, sir, (said Beauclerk) you are like Hogarth's Idle Apprentice." When Johnson got his pension, Beauclerk said to him, in the humorous phrase of Falstaff, "I hope you'll now purge, and live cleanly, like a gentleman."

One night, when Beauclerk and Langton had supped at a tavern in London, and sat till about three in the morning, it came into their heads to go and knock up Johnson, and see if they could prevail on him to join them in a ramble. They rapped violently at the door of his chambers in the Temple, till at last he appeared in his shirt, with his little black wig on the top of his head, instead of a night-cap, and a poker in his hand, imagining, probably, that some ruffians were coming to attack him. When he discovered who they were, and was told their errand, he smiled, and with great good-humour agreed to their proposal: "What, is it you, you

[1] [Probably some experiments in electricity, which was at one time a fashionable curiosity: it cannot be supposed that the natural philosophy of Mr. Beauclerk's country-house went very deep.—Ed.]

dogs! I'll have a frisk with you[1]." He was soon dressed, and they sallied forth together into Covent-garden, where the green-grocers and fruiterers were beginning to arrange their hampers, just come in from the country. Johnson made some attempts to help them; but the honest gardeners stared so at his figure and manner, and odd interference, that he soon saw his services were not relished. They then repaired to one of the neighbouring taverns, and made a bowl of that liquor called *bishop*, which Johnson had always liked: while, in joyous contempt of sleep, from which he had been roused, he repeated the festive lines,

> "Short, O short, then, be thy reign,
> And give us to the world again[2]!"

They did not stay long, but walked down to the Thames, took a boat and rowed to Billingsgate. Beauclerk and Johnson were so well pleased with their amusement, that they resolved to persevere in dissipation[3] for the rest of the day: but Langton deserted them, being engaged to breakfast with some young ladies. Johnson scolded him for "leaving his social friends, to go and sit with a set of wretched *un-idea'd* girls." Garrick being told of this ramble, said to him smartly, "I heard of your frolick t'other night. You 'll be in the Chronicle." Upon which

[1] Johnson, as Mr. Kemble observes to me, might here have had in his thoughts the words of Sir John Brute (a character which, doubtless, he had seen represented by Garrick), who uses nearly the same expression in "the Provoked Wife," act iii. sc. 1.—MALONE.

[2] Mr. Langton recollected, or Dr. Johnson repeated, the passage wrong. The lines are from Lord Lansdowne's Drinking Song to Sleep, and run thus:

> "Short, very short, be then thy reign,
> For I 'm in haste to laugh and drink again."—BOSWELL.

[3] [As Johnson's companions in this frolic were both thirty years younger than he, it is no wonder that Garrick should be a little alarmed at such extravagances. Nor can we help smiling at the philosopher of fifty scolding a young man of twenty, for having the *bad taste* to prefer the company of a set of wretched un-idea'd girls.—ED.]

Johnson afterwards observed, "*He* durst not do such a thing. His *wife*[1] would not *let* him!"

Hawk.p. 329.340. [His acquaintance was now sought by persons of the first eminence in literature, and his house, in respect of the conversations there, became an academy. Many persons were desirous of adding him to the number of their friends. Invitations to dine with such of those as he liked, he so seldom declined, that, to a friend of his, he said, "I never but once, upon a resolution to employ myself in study, balked an invitation out to dinner, and then I stayed at home and did nothing." Little, however, did that laxity of temper, which this confession seems to imply, retard the progress of the great work in which he was employed: the conclusion, and also the perfection of his dictionary, were objects from which his attention was not to be diverted. The avocations he gave way to were such only as, when complied with, served to invigorate his mind to the performance of his engagements to his employers and the publick, and hasten the approach of the day that was to reward his labour with applause.]

He entered upon this year, 1753, with his usual piety, as appears from the following prayer, which I transcribed from that part of his diary which he burnt a few days before his death:

"Jan. 1, 1753, N. S. which I shall use for the future.

"Almighty God, who hast continued my life to this day, grant that, by the assistance of thy Holy Spirit, I may improve the time which thou shalt grant me, to my eternal salvation. Make me to remember, to thy glory, thy judgements, and thy mercies. Make me so to consider the loss of my wife, whom thou hast taken from me, that it may dispose me, by thy grace, to lead the residue of my life in thy fear. Grant this, O LORD, for JESUS CHRIST'S sake. Amen."

[1] [This sarcastic allusion to Garrick's domestic habits seems a little inconsistent with that almost morbid regret which Johnson felt so long for the loss of his own wife.—ED.]

He now relieved the drudgery of his Dictionary, and the melancholy of his grief, by taking an active part in the composition of "The Adventurer," in which he began to write, April 10, marking his essays with the signature T, by which most of his papers in that collection are distinguished: those, however, which have that signature, and also that of *Mysargyrus*, were not written by him, but, as I suppose, by Dr. Bathurst. Indeed Johnson's energy of thought and richness of language are still more decisive marks than any signature. As a proof of this, my readers, I imagine, will not doubt that number 39, on Sleep, is his; for it not only has the general texture and colour of his style, but the authours with whom he was peculiarly conversant are readily introduced in it in cursory allusion. The translation of a passage in Statius[1] quoted in that paper, and marked C. B., has been erroneously ascribed to Dr. Bathurst, whose christian name was Richard. How much this amiable man actually contributed to "The Adventurer," cannot be known. Let me add, that Hawkesworth's imitations of Johnson are sometimes so happy, that it is extremely difficult to distinguish them, with certainty, from the composition of his great archetype. Hawkesworth was his closest imitator, a circumstance of which that writer would once have been proud to be told; though, when he had become elated by having arisen into some degree of consequence, he, in a conversation with me, had the provoking effrontery[2] to say he was not sensible of it.

[1] This is a slight inaccuracy. The Latin Sapphicks translated by C. B. in that paper were written by Cowley, and are in his fourth book on Plants.—MALONE.

[2] [This is not a tone in which Mr. Boswell should have allowed himself to speak of Doctor Hawkesworth on such an occasion; the improved style of Dr. Johnson in the Idler might as well be said to be borrowed from the Adventurer, as that of the Adventurer from the Rambler. Johnson and Hawkesworth may have influenced each other, and yet either might say, without *effrontery*, that he

Johnson was truly zealous for the success of "The Adventurer;" and very soon after his engaging in it, he wrote the following letter:

"TO THE REVEREND DR. JOSEPH WARTON.

"8 March, 1753.

"DEAR SIR,—I ought to have written to you before now, but I ought to do many things which I do not; nor can I, indeed, claim any merit from this letter; for being desired by the authours and proprietor of the Adventurer to look out for another hand, my thoughts necessarily fixed upon you, whose fund of literature will enable you to assist them, with very little interruption of your studies.

"They desire you to engage to furnish one paper a month, at two guineas a paper, which you may very readily perform. We have considered that a paper should consist of pieces of imagination, pictures of life, and disquisitions of literature. The part which depends on the imagination is very well supplied, as you will find when you read the paper; for descriptions of life, there is now a treaty almost made with an authour and an authouress[1]; and the province of criticism and literature they are very desirous to assign to the commentator on Virgil.

"I hope this proposal will not be rejected, and that the next post will bring us your compliance. I speak as one of the fraternity, though I have no part in the paper, beyond now and then a motto; but two of the writers are my particular friends, and I hope the pleasure of seeing a third united to them will not be denied to, dear sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON.]

The consequence of this letter was, Dr. Warton's enriching the collection with several admirable essays.

ED. [And here, though a little out of the order of date, may be introduced Doctor Johnson's letter to Dr. Warton on the conclusion of the Adventurer.

"8 March, 1754.

Life of Dr. Warton, p. 219. "DEAR SIR,—I cannot but congratulate you upon the conclusion of a work, in which you have borne so great a part

was not conscious of it. Boswell had the mania of imagining, that every eminent writer of the day owed his fame to being an imitator of Johnson; we shall see several instances of it in the course of the work.—ED.]

[1] [Mr. Malone here added a long note, surmising that this author and authoress were Henry Fielding and his sister; but he produces no proof, and seems to admit, that even if they were the persons meant, they never contributed.—ED.]

with so much reputation. I immediately determined that your name should be mentioned, but the paper having been some time written, Mr. Hawkesworth, I suppose, did not care to disorder its text, and therefore put your eulogy in a note. He and every other man mentions your papers of Criticism with great commendation, though not with greater than they deserve. Life of Dr. Warton, p. 219.

"But how little can we venture to exult in any intellectual powers or literary attainments, when we consider the condition of poor Collins. I knew him a few years ago full of hopes and full of projects, versed in many languages, high in fancy, and strong in retention. This busy and forcible mind is now under the government of those who lately would not have been able to comprehend the least and most narrow of its designs. What do you hear of him? are there hopes of his recovery? or is he to pass the remainder of his life in misery and degradation? perhaps with complete consciousness of his calamity.

"You have flattered us, dear sir, for some time with hopes of seeing you; when you come you will find your reputation increased, and with it the kindness of those friends who do not envy you; for success always produces either love or hatred. I enter my name among those that love, and love you more and more in proportion, as by writing more you are more known; and believe, that as you continue to diffuse among us your integrity and learning, I shall be still with greater esteem and affection, dear sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Johnson's saying "I have no part in the paper, beyond now and then a motto," may seem inconsistent with his being the authour of the papers marked T. But he had, at this time, written only one number[1];

[1] The authour, I conceive, is here in an errour. He had before stated, that Johnson began to write in "The Adventurer" on April 10th (when No. 45 was published), above a month after the date of his letter to Dr. Warton. The two papers published previously with the signature T, and subscribed MYSARGYRUS (No. 34 and 41), were written, I believe, by Bonnel Thornton, who contributed also the papers signed A. This information I received several years ago; but do not precisely remember from whom I derived it. I believe, however, my informer was Dr. Warton.

With respect to No. 39, on Sleep, which our authour has ascribed to Johnson (see p. 210), even if it were written by him, it would not be inconsistent with his statement to Dr. Warton; for it appeared on March 20th, near a fortnight after the date of Johnson's letter to that gentleman.—But on considering it attentively, though the style bears a strong resemblance to that of Johnson, I believe it was written by his friend, Dr. Bathurst, and perhaps touched in a few places by Johnson. Mr. Boswell has observed, that "this paper not only has the general texture and colour of his style, but the authours with whom he was peculiarly conversant are readily introduced in it, in cursory allusion." Now

and besides, even at any after period, he might have used the same expression, considering it as a point of honour not to own them; for Mrs. Williams told me that, "as he had *given* those Essays to Dr. Bathurst, who sold them at two guineas each, he never would own them; nay, he used to say, he did not *write* them: but the fact was, that he *dictated* them while Bathurst wrote." I read to him Mrs. Williams's account; he smiled and said nothing.

I am not quite satisfied with the casuistry[1] by

the authours mentioned in that paper are Fontenelle, Milton, Ramazzini, Madlle. Scuderi, Swift, Homer, Barretier, Statius, Cowley, and Sir Thomas Browne. With many of these, doubtless, Johnson was particularly conversant; but I doubt whether he would have characterised the expression quoted from Swift as *elegant;* and with the works of Ramazzini it is very improbable that he should have been acquainted. Ramazzini was a celebrated physician, who died at Padua, in 1714, at the age of 81; with whose writings Dr. Bathurst may be supposed to have been conversant. So also with respect to Cowley: Johnson, without doubt, had read his Latin poem on plants; but Bathurst's profession probably led him to read it with more attention than his friend had given to it; and Cowley's eulogy on the POPPY would more readily occur to the naturalist and the physician, than to a more general reader. I believe, however, that the last paragraph of the paper on Sleep, in which Sir Thomas Browne is quoted, to show the propriety of prayer, before we lie down to rest, was added by Johnson.—MALONE.

[There is a great confusion and, as it seems, several errors in Mr. Boswell's and Mr. Malone's account of Johnson's share in the Adventurer, but it may be confidently asserted, on the evidence of Dr. Warton, and on Johnson's own confession to Miss Boothby (*Letters*, p. 48), that he wrote *all* those marked with the signature *T.* of which No. 39 on Sleep is one. The only difficulty is, that on the *8th March* he tells Dr. Warton that he had "no *part* in the paper," and that one of the letters of Mysargyrus, marked T., was published on the 3*d:* but Johnson, whether he *gave* some of these essays to Dr. Bathurst or not, probably did not consider himself as having, by the writing *one* letter, a *part.*—that is, a *proprietary* or *responsible part*,—in the paper; and even if the letters principally in question had not had the mark *T.*, the pedantic signature *Mysargyrus* would have been enough to lead us to suspect that they were Johnson's. Almost all the names, whether of men or women, affixed to the letters in the Rambler and Idler are of the same class.—ED.]

[1] [Mr. Boswell's reprehension of this casuistry seems just and candid. A man may undoubtedly sell the works of his mind as well as of his hands, but in neither case can *falsehood* (which might become *fraud*) be justified. Dollond would have had a perfect right to present a friend with one of his instruments to be sold to that friend's advantage, but he would not have been justifiable in allowing another maker to use his name. If a publisher had, on the strength of these papers in the Adventurer, offered Dr. Bathurst a large price for a literary work, could Johnson have possibly acquiesced in such a mistake? But after all, it seems doubtful that Johnson did give up *all* his share of the profits of the Adventurer to Dr. Bathurst, who, as Hawkins says, wrote the papers marked A. Johnson was at this period in great pecuniary distress—greater, we may suppose, than Bathurst was likely to be in. Mr. Chalmers treats lightly Dr. Johnson's seeming acquiescence in Mrs. Williams's statement: "Dr. Johnson," says he, "probably smiled to see his friend puzzling himself with a difficulty which a plain question could in a moment have removed."—*Brit. Ess.* vol. xxiii. p. 32.—ED.]

which the productions of one person are thus passed upon the world for the productions of another. I allow that not only knowledge, but powers and qualities of mind may be communicated; but the actual effect of individual exertion never can be transferred, with truth, to any other than its own original cause. One person's child may be made the child of another person by adoption, as among the Romans, or by the ancient Jewish mode of a wife having children borne to her upon her knees, by her handmaid. But these were children in a different sense from that of nature. It was clearly understood that they were not of the blood of their nominal parents. So in literary children, an authour may give the profits and fame of his composition to another man, but cannot make that other the real authour. A Highland gentleman, a younger branch of a family, once consulted me if he could not validly purchase the chieftainship of his family from the chief, who was willing to sell it. I told him it was impossible for him to acquire, by purchase, a right to be a different person from what he really was; for that the right of chieftainship attached to the blood of primogeniture, and, therefore, was incapable of being transferred. I added, that though Esau sold his birthright, or the advantages belonging to it, he still remained the first-born of his parents; and that whatever agreement a chief might make with any of the clan, the heralds'-office could not admit of the metamorphosis, or with any decency attest that the younger was the elder; but I did not convince the worthy gentleman.

Johnson's papers in the Adventurer are very similar to those of the Rambler[1]; but being rather more varied

[1] Dr. Johnson lowered and somewhat disguised his style, in writing the Adventurers, in order that his papers might pass for those of Dr. Bathurst, to whom he consigned the profits. This was Hawkesworth's opinion.—BURNEY.

[This seems very improbable; it is much more likely that, observing and

in their subjects, and being mixed with essays by other writers, upon topicks more generally attractive than even the most elegant ethical discourses, the sale of the work, at first, was more extensive. Without meaning, however, to depreciate the Adventurer, I must observe, that as the value of the Rambler came, in the progress of time, to be better known, it grew upon the publick estimation, and that its sale has far exceeded that of any other periodical papers since the reign of Queen Anne.

In one of the books of his diary I find the following entry:

"Apr. 3, 1753. I began the second vol. of my Dictionary, room being left in the first for Preface, Grammar, and History, none of them yet begun.

"O God, who hast hitherto supported me, enable me to proceed in this labour, and in the whole task of my present state; and when I shall render up, at the last day, an account of the talent committed to me, I may receive pardon, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen."

["DR. JOHNSON TO MR. RICHARDSON.

"26th Sept. 1753.

"DEAR SIR,—I return you my sincerest thanks for the volumes of your new work[1]; but it is a kind of tyrannical kindness to give only so much at a time, as makes more longed for; but that will probably be thought, even of the whole, when you have given it.

"I have no objection but to the preface, in which you first mention the letters as fallen by some chance into your hands, and afterwards mention your health as such, that you almost despaired of going through your plan. If you were to require my opinion which part should be changed, I should be inclined to the suppression of that part which seems to disclaim the composition. What is modesty, if it deserts from truth? Of what use is the disguise by which nothing is concealed?

"You must forgive this, because it is meant well.

feeling that a lighter style was better suited to such essays, he, with his natural good sense, fell a little into the easier manner of his colleagues. See *ante*, p. 234, *n*.—ED.]

[1] [Sir Charles Grandison, which was originally published in successive volumes. This relates to the sixth and seventh volumes.—ED.]

"I thank you once more, dear sir, for your books; but cannot I prevail this time for an index?—such I wished, and shall wish, to Clarissa [1]. Suppose that in one volume an accurate index was made to the three works—but while I am writing an objection arises—such an index to the three would look like the preclusion of a fourth, to which I will never contribute; for if I cannot benefit mankind, I hope never to injure them. I am, sir, your most obliged and most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

He this year favoured Mrs. Lenox with a Dedication * to the Earl of Orrery, of her "Shakspeare Illustrated [2]."

In 1754 I can trace nothing published by him, except his numbers of the Adventurer, and "The Life of Edward Cave *," in the Gentleman's Magazine for February. In biography there can be no question that he excelled, beyond all who have attempted that species of composition; upon which, indeed, he set the highest value. To the minute selection [3] of characteristical circumstances, for which the ancients were remarkable, he added a philosophical research, and the most perspicuous and energetick language. Cave was certainly a man of estimable qualities, and

[1] Richardson adopted Johnson's hint; for in 1755 he published in octavo, "A Collection of the Moral and Instructive Sentiments, Maxims, Cautions, and Reflections, contained in the Histories of Pamela, Clarissa, and Sir Charles Grandison, digested under proper heads." It is remarkable, that both to this book, and to the first two volumes of Clarissa, is prefixed a Preface *by a friend*. The "friend," in this latter instance, was the celebrated Dr. Warburton.—MALONE.

[2] [Dr. Warton, in a letter to his brother, 7th June, 1753, says, "I want to see Charlotte Lennox's book," upon which Mr. Wooll adds the following note: "This *eminently learned* lady translated the Enchiridion of Epictetus, and the Greek theatre of Le Père Brumoy."—*Life of W.* p. 217. Poor Mrs. Lennox had no claim to the title of "an eminently learned lady." She did *not* translate Epictetus; and her translation from the *French* of Brumoy was not published till 1759. It was probably her above-mentioned book on Shakspeare that Dr. Warton was desirous of seeing in 1753.—ED.]

[3] [This is not Johnson's appropriate praise; and indeed his want of attention to details is his greatest if not his only fault as a biographer. In the whole *Life of Savage* there is not one date; and no one, from his *Life of Cave*, would have imagined that Cave had been invited to meet the Prince and Princess of Wales at a country-house. Several details and corrections of errors, with which he was furnished for his *Lives of the Poets*, were wholly neglected. But in truth Mr. Boswell himself has, more than any other writer, contributed to create the public taste for biographical details; "the minute selection of characteristic circumstances" was neither the style of Johnson, nor the fashion of his day.—ED.]

was eminently diligent and successful in his own business, which, doubtless, entitled him to respect. But he was peculiarly fortunate in being recorded by Johnson; who, of the narrow life of a printer and publisher, without any digression or adventitious circumstances, has made an interesting and agreeable narrative.

The Dictionary, we may believe, afforded Johnson full occupation this year. As it approached to its conclusion, he probably worked with redoubled vigour, as seamen increase their exertions and alacrity when they have a near prospect of their haven.

Lord Chesterfield, to whom Johnson had paid the high compliment of addressing to his lordship the Plan of his Dictionary, had behaved to him in such a manner as to excite his contempt and indignation. The world has been for many years amused with a story confidently told, and as confidently repeated with additional circumstances, that a sudden disgust was taken by Johnson upon occasion of his having been one day kept long in waiting in his lordship's antechamber, for which the reason assigned was, that he had company with him; and that at last, when the door opened, out walked Colley Cibber; and that Johnson was so violently provoked when he found for whom he had been so long excluded, that he went away in a passion, and never would return. I remember having mentioned this story to George Lord Lyttelton, who told me he was very intimate with Lord Chesterfield; and holding it as a well-known truth, defended Lord Chesterfield by saying, that "Cibber, who had been introduced familiarly by the back-stairs, had probably not been there above ten minutes." It may seem strange even to entertain a doubt concerning a story so long and so widely current, and thus implicitly adopted, if not sanctioned,

by the authority which I have mentioned; but Johnson himself assured me, that there was not the least foundation for it.[1] He told me, that there never was any particular incident which produced a quarrel between Lord Chesterfield and him; but that his lordship's continued neglect[2] was the reason why he resolved to

[1] [Hawkins, who lived much with Johnson about this period, attributes the breach between him and Lord Chesterfield to the offence taken by Johnson at being kept waiting during a visit of Cibber's; and Johnson himself, in his celebrated letter, seems to give colour to this latter opinion. He says: "It is seven years since I *waited in your outer rooms*, or was *repulsed from your door*, during which I have pushed my work to the verge of publication without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour." The expressions, "*waited in your outer rooms*" and "*repulsed from your door*," certainly gave colour to "the long current and implicitly adopted story" as told by Hawkins, and sanctioned by Lord Lyttelton. In all this affair, Johnson's account, as given by Boswell, is involved in inconsistencies, which seem to prove that his pride, or his waywardness, had taken offence at what he afterwards felt, in his own heart, to be no adequate cause of animosity.—ED.]

[2] Why was it to be expected that Lord Chesterfield should cultivate his private acquaintance? that he did not do so was a loss to his lordship; and the "*amour-propre*" of Johnson might be (as, indeed, it probably was) offended at that neglect, but surely it was no ground for the kind of charge which is made against his lordship.

But even this neglect of Johnson's acquaintance is not without some excuse. Johnson's personal manners and habits, even at a later and more polished period of his life, would probably not have been much to Lord Chesterfield's taste; but it must be remembered, that Johnson's introduction to Lord Chesterfield did not take place till his lordship was past *fifty*, and he was soon after attacked by a disease which *estranged him from society*. The neglect lasted, it is charged, from 1748 to 1755: the following extracts of his private letters to his most intimate friends will prove that during that period Lord Chesterfield may be excused for not cultivating Johnson's society:—

20th January, 1749.—"My old disorder in my head hindered me from acknowledging your former letters."

30th June, 1752.—"I am here in my hermitage, very deaf, and consequently *alone*; but I am *less dejected than most people in my situation would be*."

14th Nov. 1752.—"The waters have done my head some good, but not enough to *refit me for social life*."

16th Feb. 1753.—"I grow deafer, and consequently more '*isolé*' *from society* every day."

10th Oct. 1753.—"I belong *no more to social life*, which, when I quitted busy publick life, I flattered myself would be the comfort of my declining age."

16th Nov. 1753.—"I give up all hopes of cure. I know my place and form my plan accordingly, for *I strike society out of it*."

7th Feb. 1754.—"At my *age*, and with my *shattered constitution*, freedom from pain is the best I can expect."

1st March, 1754.—"I am too much *isolé*, too much secluded either from the busy or idle *beau monde*, to give you any account of either."

25th Sept. 1754.—"In truth, all the infirmities of an age still more advanced than mine crowd upon me. In this situation you will easily suppose that I have no pleasant hours."

10th July, 1755.—"My deafness is extremely increased, and daily increasing, and cuts me wholly *off from the society of others*, and my other complaints deny me the society of myself."

Johnson perhaps knew nothing of all this, and imagined that Lord Chesterfield declined his acquaintance on some opinion derogatory to his personal

have no connexion with him. When the Dictionary was upon the eve of publication, Lord Chesterfield, who, it is said, had flattered himself with expectations that Johnson would dedicate the work to him, attempted, in a courtly manner, to soothe and insinuate himself with the sage, conscious, as it should seem, of the cold indifference with which he had treated its learned authour; and further attempted to conciliate him, by writing two papers in "The World," in recommendation of the work; and it must be confessed, that they contain some studied compliments, so finely turned, that if there had been no previous offence, it is probable that Johnson would have been highly delighted. Praise, in general, was pleasing to him; but by praise from a man of rank and elegant accomplishments, he was peculiarly gratified.

His lordship says, "I think the publick in general, and the republick of letters in particular, are greatly obliged to Mr. Johnson, for having undertaken and executed so great and desirable a work. Perfection is not to be expected from man: but if we are to judge by the various works of Johnson already published, we have good reason to believe, that he will bring this as near to perfection as any man could do. The plan of it, which he published some years ago, seems to me to be a proof of it. Nothing can be more rationally imagined, or more accurately and elegantly expressed. I therefore recommend the previous perusal of it to all those who intend to buy

pretensions. Mr. Tyers however, who knew Johnson early and more familiarly than the other biographers, suggests a more precise and probable ground for Johnson's animosity than Boswell gives, by hinting that Johnson expected some *pecuniary assistance* from Lord Chesterfield. He says, "It does not appear that Lord Chesterfield showed any *substantial* proofs of approbation to our philologer. A *small* present Johnson would have disdained, and he was not of a temper to put up with the *affront* of a *disappointment*. He *revenged* himself in a letter to his lordship written with great acrimony. Lord Chesterfield indeed commends and recommends Mr. Johnson's Dictionary in two or three numbers of the World: but 'not *words alone* please him.'"—*Biog. Sketch.* p. 7.

the Dictionary, and who, I suppose, are all those who can afford it.

* * * * *

"It must be owned, that our language is, at present, in a state of anarchy, and hitherto, perhaps, it may not have been the worse for it. During our free and open trade, many words and expressions have been imported, adopted, and neutralized from other languages, which have greatly enriched our own. Let it still preserve what real strength and beauty it may have borrowed from others; but let it not, like the Tarpeian maid, be overwhelmed and crushed by unnecessary ornaments. The time for discrimination seems to be now come. Toleration, adoption, and naturalization have run their lengths. Good order and authority are now necessary. But where shall we find them, and at the same time, the obedience due to them? We must have recourse to the old Roman expedient in times of confusion, and choose a dictator. Upon this principle I give my vote for Mr. Johnson, to fill that great and arduous post; and I hereby declare that I make a total surrender of all my rights and privileges in the English language, as a free-born British subject, to the said Mr. Johnson, during the term of his dictatorship. Nay more, I will not only obey him like an old Roman, as my dictator, but, like a modern Roman, I will implicitly believe in him as my pope, and hold him to be infallible while in the chair, but no longer. More than this he cannot well require; for, I presume, that obedience can never be expected, when there is neither terrour to enforce, nor interest to invite it.

* * * * *

"But a Grammar, a Dictionary, and a History of our Language, through its several stages, were still

wanting at home, and importunately called for from abroad. Mr. Johnson's labours will now, I dare say, very fully supply that want, and greatly contribute to the farther spreading of our language in other countries. Learners were discouraged, by finding no standard to resort to; and, consequently, thought it incapable of any. They will now be undeceived and encouraged."

This courtly device failed of its effect.[1] Johnson, who thought that "all was false and hollow," despised the honeyed words, and was even indignant that Lord Chesterfield should, for a moment, imagine that he could be the dupe of such an artifice. His expression to me concerning Lord Chesterfield, upon this occasion, was, "Sir, after making great professions, he had, for many years, taken no notice of me; but when my Dictionary was coming out, he fell a scribbling in 'The World' about it. Upon which, I wrote him a letter expressed in civil terms, but such as might show him that I did not mind what he said or wrote, and that I had done with him."

This is that celebrated letter of which so much has been said, and about which curiosity has been so long excited, without being gratified. I for many years solicited Johnson to favour me with a copy of it, that so excellent a composition might not be lost to posterity. He delayed from time to time to give it to me[2]; till at last, in 1781, when we were on a visit at Mr. Dilly's, at Southill in Bedfordshire, he

[1] [It does not appear that there was any thing like "*device*" or "*artifice*." —Ed.]

[2] Dr. Johnson appeared to have had a remarkable delicacy with respect to the circulation of this letter; for Dr. Douglas, bishop of Salisbury, informs me, that having many years ago pressed him to be allowed to read it to the second Lord Hardwicke, who was very desirous to hear it, promising at the same time, that no copy of it should be taken, Johnson seemed much pleased that it had attracted the attention of a nobleman of such respectable character; but after pausing some time, declined to comply with the request, saying, with a smile, "No, sir, I have hurt the dog too much already;" or words to that purpose.—Boswell. [This admission favours the editor's opinion that Johnson, when the first ebullition of temper had subsided, felt that he had been unreasonably violent.—Ed.]

was pleased to dictate it to me from memory. He afterwards found among his papers a copy of it, which he had dictated to Mr. Baretti, with its title and corrections, in his own hand-writing. This he gave to Mr. Langton; adding that if it were to come into print, he wished it to be from that copy. By Mr. Langton's kindness, I am enabled to enrich my work with a perfect transcript of what the world has so eagerly desired to see.

TO THE EARL OF CHESTERFIELD.

"7th February, 1755.

"My lord,—I have been lately informed, by the proprietor of 'The World,' that two papers, in which my Dictionary is recommended to the publick, were written by your lordship. To be so distinguished is an honour, which, being very little accustomed to favours from the great, I know not well how to receive, or in what terms to acknowledge.

"When, upon some slight encouragement, I first visited your lordship, I was overpowered, like the rest of mankind, by the enchantment of your address, and could not forbear to wish that I might boast myself *Le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre*[1]; —that I might obtain that regard for which I saw the world contending; but I found my attendance so little encouraged, that neither pride nor modesty would suffer me to continue it. When I had once addressed your lordship in publick, I had exhausted all the art of pleasing which a retired and uncourtly scholar can possess. I had done all that I could; and no man is well pleased to have his all neglected, be it ever so little.

"Seven years, my lord, have now past, since I waited in your outward rooms, or was repulsed from your door; during which time I have been pushing on my work through difficulties, of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it, at last, to the verge of publication, without one act of assistance[2], one

[1] [No very moderate expectation for "*a retired* and uncourtly scholar!"—Ed.]

[2] The following note is subjoined by Mr. Langton: "Dr. Johnson, when he gave me this copy of his letter, desired that I would annex to it his information to me, that whereas it is said in the letter that 'no assistance has been received,' he did once receive from Lord Chesterfield the sum of ten pounds; but as that was so inconsiderable a sum, he thought the mention of it could not properly find a place in a letter of the kind that this was."—Boswell. [This surely is an unsatisfactory excuse; for the sum, though now so inconsiderable, was one which many years before, Johnson tells us, that Paul Whitehead, then a fashionable poet, received for a new work; it was as much as Johnson himself had received for the copyright of his best poetical production; and when Dr.

word of encouragement, or one smile of favour. Such treatment I did not expect, for I never had a patron before.

"The shepherd in Virgil grew at last acquainted with Love, and found him a native of the rocks [1].

"Is not a patron, my lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and, when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early [2], had been kind; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it [3]; till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity, not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the publick should consider me as owing that to a patron, which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

"Having carried on my work thus far with so little obligation to any favourer of learning, I shall not be disappointed though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less; for I have been long wakened from that dream of hope, in which I once boasted myself with so much exultation. My lord, your lordship's most humble, most obedient servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON [4]."

Madden, some years after, gave him the same sum for revising a work of his, Johnson said that the Doctor "was *very generous*, for ten guineas was to me, at that time, a *great sum*" (see *post*, 1756). When Johnson alleged against Lord Chesterfield such a trifle as the *waiting in his anteroom*, he ought not to have omitted a pecuniary obligation, however inconsiderable.—ED.]

[1] [The editor confesses that he does not see the object of this allusion; if some more ingenious eye should discover a meaning, it must still be admitted to be pedantic.—ED.]

[2] [The notice could not have been, for any useful purpose, taken earlier. Johnson might have complained that notice of *some other kind* had not been taken, but "*the notice which his lordship was pleased to take*" was peculiarly well timed, and could not properly have come sooner.—ED.]

[3] In this passage Dr. Johnson evidently alludes to the loss of his wife. We find the same tender recollection recurring to his mind upon innumerable occasions: and perhaps no man ever more forcibly felt the truth of the sentiment so elegantly expressed by my friend Mr. Malone, in his prologue to Mr. Jephson's tragedy of Julia:

"Vain—wealth, and fame, and fortune's fostering care,
If no fond breast the splendid blessings share;
And, each day's bustling pageantry once past,
There, only there, our bliss is found at last."—BOSWELL.

[4] Upon comparing this copy with that which Dr. Johnson dictated to me from recollection, the variations are found to be so slight, that this must be added to the many other proofs which he gave of the wonderful extent and accuracy of his memory. To gratify the curious in composition, I have deposited both the copies in the British Museum.—BOSWELL.

"While this was the talk of the town[1], (says Dr. Adams, in a letter to me) I happened to visit Dr. Warburton, who, finding that I was acquainted with Johnson, desired me earnestly to carry his compliments to him, and to tell him, that he honoured him for his manly behaviour in rejecting these condescensions of Lord Chesterfield, and for resenting the treatment he had received from him with a proper spirit. Johnson was visibly pleased with this compliment, for he had always a high opinion of Warburton[2]." Indeed, the force of mind which appeared in this letter was congenial with that which Warburton himself amply possessed.

There is a curious minute circumstance which struck me, in comparing the various editions of Johnson's Imitations of Juvenal. In the tenth Satire one of the couplets upon the vanity of wishes even for literary distinction stood thus:

"Yet think what ills the scholar's life assail,
Toil, envy, want, the *garret*, and the jail."

But after experiencing the uneasiness which Lord Chesterfield's fallacious patronage made him feel, he dismissed the word *garret* from the sad group, and in all the subsequent editions the line stands,

"Toil, envy, want, the *Patron*, and the jail."

That Lord Chesterfield must have been mortified by the lofty contempt, and polite, yet keen, satire with which Johnson exhibited him to himself in this

[1] [If this letter was the talk of the town, it appears, from all the evidence, that it must have become known through Lord Chesterfield, as Johnson always refused to let it be seen.—Ed.]

[2] Soon after Edwards's "Canons of Criticism" came out, Johnson was dining at Tonson the bookseller's with Hayman the painter and some more company. Hayman related to Sir Joshua Reynolds, that the conversation *having turned* upon Edwards's book, the gentlemen praised it much, and Johnson allowed its merit. But when they went farther, and appeared to put that authour upon a level with Warburton, "Nay (said Johnson), he has given him some smart hits, to be sure; but there is no proportion between the two men; they must not be named together. A fly, sir, may sting a stately horse, and make him wince; but one is but an insect, and the other is a horse still."—Boswell.

letter, it is impossible to doubt. He, however, with that glossy duplicity which was his constant study, affected to be quite unconcerned. Dr. Adams mentioned to Mr. Robert Dodsley that he was sorry Johnson had written his letter to Lord Chesterfield. Dodsley, with the true feelings of trade, said, "he was very sorry too; for that he had a property in the Dictionary, to which his lordship's patronage might have been of consequence." He then told Dr. Adams, that Lord Chesterfield had shown him the letter. "I should have imagined (replied Dr. Adams) that Lord Chesterfield would have concealed it." "Poh! (said Dodsley) do you think a letter from Johnson could hurt Lord Chesterfield? Not at all, sir. It lay upon his table, where any body might see it. He read it to me; said, 'this man has great powers,' pointed out the severest passages, and observed how well they were expressed." The air of indifference, which imposed upon the worthy Dodsley, was certainly nothing but a specimen of that dissimulation[1] which Lord Chesterfield inculcated as one of the most essential lessons for the conduct of life. His lordship endeavoured to justify himself to Dodsley from the charges brought against him by Johnson; but we may judge of the flimsiness of his defence, from his having excused his neglect of Johnson, by saying, that "he had heard he had changed his lodgings, and did not know where he lived;" as if there could have been the smallest difficulty to inform himself of that circumstance, by inquiring in the literary circle

[1] [Why? If, as may have been the case, Lord Chesterfield felt that Johnson was unjust towards him, he would not have been mortified—*Il n'y a que la verité qui blesse.* By Mr. Boswell's own confession it appears that Johnson did not give copies of this letter; that for many years Boswell had in vain solicited him to do so, and that he, after the lapse of twenty years, did so reluctantly. With all these admissions, how can Mr. Boswell attribute to any thing but conscious rectitude Lord Chesterfield's exposure of a letter which the author was so willing to bury in oblivion?—ED.]

with which his lordship was well acquainted, and was, indeed, himself, one of its ornaments.

Dr. Adams expostulated with Johnson, and suggested, that his not being admitted when he called on him, was probably not to be imputed to Lord Chesterfield; for his lordship had declared to Dodsley, that "he would have turned off the best servant he ever had, if he had known that he denied him to a man who would have been always more than welcome;" and in confirmation of this, he insisted on Lord Chesterfield's general affability and easiness of access, especially to literary men. "Sir (said Johnson), that is not Lord Chesterfield; he is the proudest man this day existing." "No (said Dr. Adams), there is one person, at least, as proud; I think, by your own account, you are the prouder man of the two." "But mine (replied Johnson instantly) was *defensive* pride." This, as Dr. Adams well observed, was one of those happy turns[1] for which he was so remarkably ready.

Johnson having now explicitly avowed his opinion of Lord Chesterfield, did not refrain from expressing himself concerning that nobleman with pointed freedom: "This man (said he) I thought had been a lord among wits: but, I find, he is only a wit among lords!" And when his Letters to his natural son were published, he observed, that "they teach the morals of a prostitute, and the manners of a dancing-master[2]."

[1] [This, like all the rest of the affair, seems discoloured by prejudice. Lord Chesterfield made no *attack* on Johnson, who certainly acted on the *offensive*, and not the defensive.—ED.]

[2] That collection of letters cannot be vindicated from the serious charge of encouraging, in some passages, one of the vices most destructive to the good order and comfort of society, which his lordship represents a mere fashionable gallantry; and, in others, of inculcating the base practice of dissimulation, and recommending, with disproportionate anxiety, a perpetual attention to external elegance of manners. But it must, at the same time, be allowed, that they contain many good precepts of conduct, and much genuine information upon life and manners, very happily expressed; and that there was considerable merit in

The character of a "respectable Hottentot," in Lord Chesterfield's Letters, has been generally understood to be meant for Johnson, and I have no doubt that it was. But I remember when the *literary property* of those letters was contested in the court of session in Scotland, and Mr. Henry Dundas [1], one of the counsel for the proprietors, read this character as an exhibition of Johnson, Sir David Dalrymple, Lord Hailes, one of the judges, maintained, with some warmth, that it was not intended as a portrait of Johnson, but of a late noble lord [2], distinguished for abstruse science. I have heard Johnson himself talk of the character, and say that it was meant for George Lord Lyttelton, in which I could by no means agree; for his lordship had nothing of that violence which is a conspicuous feature in the composition. Finding that my illustrious friend could bear to have it supposed that it might be meant for him, I said, laughingly, that there was one trait which unquestionably did not belong to him; "he throws his meat any

paying so much attention to the improvement of one who was dependent upon his lordship's protection; it has, probably, been exceeded in no instance by the most exemplary parent; and though I can by no means approve of confounding the distinction between lawful and illicit offspring, which is, in effect, insulting the civil establishment of our country, to look no higher; I cannot help thinking it laudable to be kindly attentive to those, of whose existence we have, in any way, been the cause. Mr. Stanhope's character has been unjustly represented as diametrically opposite to what Lord Chesterfield wished him to be. He has been called dull, gross, and awkward: but I knew him at Dresden, when he was envoy to that court; and though he could not boast of the *graces*, he was, in truth, a sensible, civil, well-behaved man.—BOSWELL.

[1] Now (1792) one of his majesty's principal secretaries of state.—BOSWELL. [And afterwards Viscount Melville.—ED.]

[2] [Probably George, second Earl of Macclesfield, who published, in 1751, a learned pamphlet on the alteration of the style, and was, in 1752, elected president of the Royal Society. Lord Macclesfield's manner was, no doubt, awkward and embarrassed, but little else in his character resembles that of the "respectable Hottentot," which more probably was, as the world has supposed, intended for Johnson.

Lord Macclesfield assisted Lord Chesterfield in the bill for changing the style; and Lord Chesterfield very candidly confessed that his own lighter and more graceful way of treating a subject which he understood but superficially ran away with the applause which was more justly due to the superior information and science of Lord Macclesfield. See *Lord Chesterfield's Life by Maty*, p. 199. —ED.]

where but down his throat." "Sir (said he), Lord Chesterfield never saw me eat in his life [1]."

On the 6th of March came out Lord Bolingbroke's works, published by Mr. David Mallet. The wild and pernicious ravings, under the name of "Philosophy," which were thus ushered into the world, gave great offence to all well-principled men. Johnson, hearing of their tendency, which nobody disputed, was roused with a just indignation [2], and pronounced this memorable sentence [3] upon the noble authour and his editor. "Sir, he was a scoundrel, and a coward: a scoundrel for charging a blunderbuss against religion and morality; a coward, because he had not resolution to fire it off himself, but left half a crown to a beggarly Scotchman [4], to draw the trigger after his death!" Garrick, who I can attest from my own knowledge had his mind seasoned with pious reverence, and sincerely disapproved of the infidel writings of several, whom in the course of his almost universal gay intercourse with men of eminence, he treated with external civility, distinguished himself upon this occasion. Mr. Pelham having died on the very day on which Lord Bolingbroke's works came out, he wrote an elegant

[1] [Lord Chesterfield's picture, if meant for Johnson, was not overcharged; for what between his blindness, his nervousness, and his eagerness, all his friends describe his mode of eating to have been something worse than awkward. See *post*, 5th Aug. 1763.—Ed.]

[2] [It was the first remarkable phrase which Mr. Murphy ever heard him utter.—Ed.]

[3] [It is, however, remarkable that Johnson had not read what he thus indignantly censured. See *post*, March, 1758, where, in conversation with Dr. Burney, he confessed that he had not read Bolingbroke's works; and was, therefore, not anxious about their refutation.—Ed.]

[4] [Mallet's wife, a foolish and conceited woman, one evening introduced herself to David Hume, at an assembly, saying, "We deists, Mr. Hume, should know one another." Hume was exceedingly displeased and disconcerted, and replied, "Madam, I am no deist; I do not so style myself, neither do I desire to be known by that appellation."—*Hardy's Life of Lord Charlemont*, vol. i. p. 235. The imputation might, even on mere worldly grounds, be very disagreeable to Hume; for the editor has in his possession proof that when Lord Hertford (whose private secretary, in his embassy to Paris, Hume had been) was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, his lordship declined continuing him in the same character, alleging as a reason the dissatisfaction that it would excite on account of Hume's anti-religious principles.—Ed.]

Ode on his death, beginning

"Let others hail the rising sun,
I bow to that whose course is run."

In which is the following stanza:

"The same sad morn, to church and state
(So for our sins 't was fixed by fate),
A double stroke was given;
Black as the whirlwinds of the north,
St. John's fell genius issued forth,
And Pelham fled to heaven."

Johnson this year found an interval of leisure to make an excursion to Oxford, for the purpose of consulting the libraries there. Of this, and of many interesting circumstances concerning him, during a part of his life when he conversed but little with the world [1], I am enabled to give a particular account, by the liberal communications of the Rev. Mr. Thomas Warton, who obligingly furnished me with several of our common friend's letters, which he illustrated with notes. These I shall insert in their proper places.

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. WARTON.

"(London), 16 July, 1754.

"SIR,—It is but an ill return for the book with which you were pleased to favour me [2], to have delayed my thanks for it till now. I am too apt to be negligent; but I can never deliberately show my disrespect to a man of your character; and I now pay you a very honest acknowledgement, for the advancement of the literature of our native country. You have shown to all, who shall hereafter attempt the study of our ancient authours, the way to success; by directing them to the perusal of the books which those authours had read. Of this method, Hughes [3], and men much greater than Hughes, seem never to have thought. The reason why the authours, which are yet read, of the sixteenth century, are so little understood, is, that they are read alone; and no help is borrowed from those

[1] [This seems to invalidate Mr. Boswell's former statement, p. 226, and to support that of Mr. Murphy.—ED.]

[2] Observations on Spenser's Fairy Queen, the first edition of which was now published.—WARTON.

[3] Hughes published an edition of Spenser.—WARTON.

who lived with them, or before them. Some part of this ignorance I hope to remove by my book [1], which now draws towards its end; but which I cannot finish to my mind, without visiting the libraries of Oxford, which I therefore hope to see in a fortnight [2]. I know not how long I shall stay, or where I shall lodge; but shall be sure to look for you at my arrival, and we shall easily settle the rest. I am, dear sir, your most obedient, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Of his conversation while at Oxford at this time, Mr. Warton preserved and communicated to me the following memorial, which, though not written with all the care and attention which that learned and elegant writer bestowed on those compositions which he intended for the publick eye, is so happily expressed in an easy style, that I should injure it by any alteration:

Thomas Warton.

"When Johnson came to Oxford in 1754, the long vacation was beginning, and most people were leaving the place. This was the first time of his being there, after quitting the University. The next morning after his arrival, he wished to see his old college, *Pembroke*. I went with him. He was highly pleased to find all the college servants which he had left there still remaining, particularly a very old butler; and expressed great satisfaction at being recognised by them, and conversed with them familiarly. He waited on the master, Dr. Radcliffe, who received him very coldly. Johnson at least expected, that the master would order a copy of his Dictionary,

[1] His Dictionary.—WARTON.

[2] He came to Oxford within a fortnight, and stayed about five weeks. He lodged at a house called Kettel-hall, near Trinity College. But during his visit at Oxford, he collected nothing in the libraries for his Dictionary.—WARTON. [Probably because, as we shall see presently, he found sufficient employment in the private library of Mr. Wise.—ED]. Kettel-Hall is an ancient tenement, adjoining to Trinity College, built about the year 1615, by Dr. Ralph Kettel, then president, for the accommodation of commoners of that society. In this ancient *hostel*, then in a very ruinous state, about forty years after Johnson had lodged there, Mr. Windham and the present writer were accommodated with two chambers, of primitive simplicity, during the installation of the Duke of Portland as chancellor of the University of Oxford, in 1793. It has since been converted into a commodious private house.—MALONE.

Thomas Warton.

now near publication; but the master did not choose to talk on the subject, never asked Johnson to dine, nor even to visit him while he stayed at Oxford. After we had left the lodgings, Johnson said to me, 'There lives a man, who lives by the revenues of literature, and will not move a finger to support it[1]. If I come to live at Oxford, I shall take up my abode at Trinity[2].' We then called on the Reverend Mr. Meeke, one of the fellows, and of Johnson's standing. Here was a most cordial greeting on both sides. On leaving him, Johnson said, 'I used to think Meeke had excellent parts, when we were boys together at the college: but, alas!

'Lost in a convent's solitary gloom!'—

I remember, at the classical lecture in the hall, I could not bear Meeke's superiority, and I tried to sit as far from him as I could, that I might not hear him construe.'

"As we were leaving the college, he said, 'Here I translated Pope's Messiah. Which do you think is the best line in it? My own favourite is,

'Vallis aromaticas fundit Saronica nubes.'

I told him, I thought it a very sonorous hexameter. I did not tell him, it was not in the Virgilian style. He much regretted that his *first* tutor was dead; for whom he seemed to retain the greatest regard. He

[1] [There is some excuse for Doctor Ratcliff's (so he spelt his name) not ordering a copy of the book, for this visit occurred seven or eight months before the Dictionary was published. His *personal* neglect of Johnson is less easily to be accounted for, unless it be by the fact that he was a great invalid; but the imputation of his living by the revenues of literature, and doing nothing for it, cannot, as Dr. Hall informs me, be justly made against Dr. Ratcliff; for he bequeathed to his college 1000*l.* 4 per-cents. for the establishment of an exhibition for the son of a Gloucestershire clergyman—1000*l.* for the improvement of the college buildings—100*l.* worth of books—and 100*l.* for contingent expenses. The residue of his property he (except 600*l.* left for the repair of the prebendal house at Gloucester) left to the old butler mentioned in the text, who had long been his servant: a bequest which Johnson himself imitated in favour of his own servant, Barber.—Ed.]

[2] [Mr. Warton's own College.—Ed.]

said, 'I once had been a whole morning sliding in Christ-Church meadows, and missed his lecture in logick. After dinner he sent for me to his room. I expected a sharp rebuke for my idleness, and went with a beating heart[1]. When we were seated, he told me he had sent for me to drink a glass of wine with him, and to tell me, he was *not* angry with me for missing his lecture. This was, in fact, a most severe reprimand. Some more of the boys were then sent for, and we spent a very pleasant afternoon.' Besides Mr. Meeke, there was only one other fellow of Pembroke now resident: from both of whom Johnson received the greatest civilities during this visit, and they pressed him very much to have a room in the college. Thomas Warton.

"In the course of this visit (1754) Johnson and I walked three or four times to Ellsfield, a village beautifully situated about three miles from Oxford, to see Mr. Wise, Radclivian librarian, with whom Johnson was much pleased. At this place, Mr. Wise had fitted up a house and gardens, in a singular manner, but with great taste. Here was an excellent library, particularly a valuable collection of books in Northern literature, with which Johnson was often very busy. One day Mr. Wise read to us a dissertation which he was preparing for the press, entitled 'A History and Chronology of the fabulous Ages.' Some old divinities of Thrace, related to the Titans, and called the CABIRI, made a very important part of the theory of this piece; and in conversation afterwards, Mr. Wise talked much of his CABIRI. As we returned

[1] [This was Johnson's earliest account of this little event, and probably the most accurate; many years after this he told the story to Boswell and Mrs. Piozzi, and made a parade of his having waited on his tutor, not with a "*beating heart*," but with "*nonchalance* and even *insolence*." It would seem as if Johnson had been induced, by the too obsequious deference of his later admirers, to assign to his character in youth a little more of that sturdy dignity than, when his recollection was fresher and his ear unspoiled by flattery, he assumed to Mr. Warton (see *ante*, p. 31, *n.*)—ED.]

Thomas Warton.

to Oxford in the evening, I outwalked Johnson, and he cried out *Sufflamina*, a Latin word, which came from his mouth with peculiar grace, and was as much as to say, *Put on your drag chain.* Before we got home, I again walked too fast for him; and he now cried out, 'Why, you walk as if you were pursued by all the CABIRI in a body.' In an evening we frequently took long walks from Oxford into the country, returning to supper. Once, in our way home, we viewed the ruins of the abbies of Oseney and Rewley, near Oxford. After at least half an hour's silence, Johnson said, 'I viewed them with indignation[1]!' We had then a long conversation on Gothic buildings: and in talking of the form of old halls, he said, 'In these halls, the fireplace was anciently always in the middle of the room, till the whigs removed it on one side[2].' About this time there had been an execution of two or three criminals at Oxford on a Monday. Soon afterwards, one day at dinner, I was saying that Mr. Swinton[3], the chaplain of the gaol, and also a frequent preacher before the university, a learned man, but often thoughtless and absent, preached the condemnation sermon on repentance, before the convicts, on the preceding day, Sunday; and that in the close he told his audience, that he should give them the remainder of what he had to say on the subject, the next Lord's Day. Upon which, one of our company, a doctor of divinity, and a plain matter-of-fact man, by way of offering an apology for Mr. Swinton, gravely remarked, that he had probably preached the same

[1] [The Scotch, who were so angry at Johnson's indignation at the desecration and dilapidation of religious edifices in Scotland, would have been pacified had they sooner known that a similar indignation was excited by similar causes in England.—ED.]

[2] [What can this mean? What had the whigs to do with removing the smoky hearths from the centre of the great halls to a more commodious chimney at the side?—ED.]

[3] [The Rev. Mr. Swinton, who had so conspicuous a share in the Universal History.—See *post*, 6 Dec. 1784.—ED.]

sermon before the university: 'Yes, sir, (says Johnson) but the university were not to be hanged the next morning.' Thomas Warton.

"I forgot to observe before, that when he left Mr. Meeke (as I have told above), he added, 'About the same time of life, Meeke was left behind at Oxford to feed on a fellowship, and I went to London to get my living: now, sir, see the difference of our literary characters[1]!"

The following letter was written by Dr. Johnson to Mr. Chambers, of Lincoln College, afterwards Sir Robert Chambers[2], one of the judges in India:

"TO MR. CHAMBERS, OF LINCOLN COLLEGE.

"21st Nov. 1754.

"DEAR SIR,—The commission which I delayed to trouble you with at your departure, I am now obliged to send you; and beg that you will be so kind as to carry it to Mr. Warton, of Trinity, to whom I should have written immediately, but that I know not if he be yet come back to Oxford.

"In the Catalogue of MSS. of Gr. Brit. see vol. i. pag. 18. MSS. Bodl. MARTYRIUM XV. *martyrum sub Juliano, auctore Theophylacto.*

"It is desired that Mr. Warton will inquire, and send word, what will be the cost of transcribing this manuscript.

"Vol. ii. p. 32. Num. 1022. 58. COLL. NOV.—*Commentaria in Acta Apostol.—Comment. in Septem Epistolas Catholicas.*

"He is desired to tell what is the age of each of these manuscripts; and what it will cost to have a transcript of the two first pages of each.

[1] [*Curis acuens mortalia corda.* Poverty was the stimulus which made Johnson exert a genius naturally, it may be supposed, more vigorous than Meeke's, and he was now beginning to enjoy the fame, of which so many painful years of distress and penury had laid the foundation. Meeke had lived an easy life of decent competence; and on the whole, perhaps, as little envied Johnson, as Johnson him: the goodness and justice of Providence equalize to a degree, not always visible at first sight, the happiness of mankind—*nec vixit malè qui natus moriensque fefellit.*—ED.]

[2] [Sir Robert Chambers was born in 1737, at Newcastle-on-Tyne, and educated at the same school with Lord Stowell and his brother the Earl of Eldon, and afterwards (like them) a member of University College. It was by visiting Chambers, when a fellow of University, that Johnson became acquainted with Lord Stowell; and when Chambers went to India, Lord Stowell, as he expressed it to the Editor, "seemed to succeed to his place in Johnson's friendship."—ED.]

"If Mr. Warton be not in Oxford, you may try if you can get it done by any body else; or stay till he comes according to your own convenience. It is for an Italian *literato*.

"The answer is to be directed to his excellency Mr. Zon, Venetian resident, Soho-square.

"I hope, dear sir, that you do not regret the change of London for Oxford. Mr. Baretti is well, and Miss Williams; and we shall all be glad to hear from you, whenever you shall be so kind as to write to, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

The degree of master of arts, which, it has been observed, could not be obtained for him at an early period of his life, was now considered as an honour of considerable importance, in order to grace the title-page of his Dictionary; and his character in the literary world being by this time deservedly high, his friends thought that, if proper exertions were made, the University of Oxford would pay him the compliment.

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. WARTON.

"(London), 28th Nov. 1754.

"DEAR SIR,—I am extremely obliged to you and to Mr. Wise, for the uncommon care which you have taken of my interest[1]; if you can accomplish your kind design, I shall certainly take me a little habitation among you.

"The books which I promised to Mr. Wise[2], I have not been able to procure: but I shall send him a Finnick dictionary, the only copy, perhaps, in England, which was presented to me by a learned Swede: but I keep it back, that it may make a set of my own books of the new edition[3], with which I shall accompany it, more welcome. You will assure him of my gratitude.

"Poor dear Collins[4]!—Would a letter give him any pleasure? I have a mind to write.

[1] In procuring him the degree of master of arts by diploma at Oxford.—WARTON.

[2] Lately fellow of Trinity College, and at this time Radclivian librarian at Oxford. He was a man of very considerable learning, and eminently skilled in Roman and Anglo-Saxon antiquities. He died in 1767.—WARTON.

[3] [This must have been a new edition of the Rambler.—ED.]

[4] Collins (the poet) was at this time at Oxford, on a visit to Mr. Warton; but labouring under the most deplorable languor of body and dejection of mind. —WARTON. Mr. Collins, who was the son of a hatter at Chichester, was born

"I am glad of your hindrance in your Spenserian design [1], yet I would not have it delayed. Three hours a day stolen from sleep and amusement will produce it. Let a servitour [2] transcribe the quotations, and interleave them with references, to save time. This will shorten the work, and lessen the fatigue.

"Can I do any thing to promote the diploma? I would not be wanting to co-operate with your kindness; of which, whatever be the effect, I shall be, dear sir, your most obliged, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. WARTON.

"(London), 21 Dec. 1754.

"DEAR SIR,—I am extremely sensible of the favour done me, both by Mr. Wise and yourself. The book [3] cannot, I think, be printed in less than six weeks, nor probably so soon; and I will keep back the title-page, for such an insertion as you seem to promise me. Be pleased to let me know what money I shall send you for bearing the expense of the affair; and I will take care that you may have it ready at your hand.

"I had lately the favour of a letter from your brother, with some account of poor Collins, for whom I am much concerned. I have a notion, that by very great temperance, or more properly abstinence [4], he may yet recover.

"There is an old English and Latin book of poems by Barclay, called 'The Ship of Fools:' at the end of which are a number of *Eglogues*,—so he writes it, from *Egloga*,—which are probably the first in our language. If you cannot find the book, I will get Mr. Dodsley to send it you.

"I shall be extremely glad to hear from you again, to know if the affair proceeds [5]. I have mentioned it to none of my friends, for fear of being laughed at for my disappointment.

"You know poor Mr. Dodsley has lost his wife; I believe he is much affected. I hope he will not suffer so much as I yet suffer for the loss of mine.

Οἴμοι· τι δ' οἴμοι; θνητὰ γὰρ πεπόνθαμεν [6].

December 25, 1720, and was released from the dismal state here so pathetically described, in 1756.—MALONE. [See *ante*, p. 239.—ED.]

[1] Of publishing a volume of observations on the best of Spenser's works. It was hindered by my taking pupils in this college.—WARTON.

[2] Young students of the lowest rank at Oxford are so called.—WARTON.

[3] His Dictionary.—WARTON.

[4] [See *ante*, p. 74, *note*.—ED.]

[5] Of the degree at Oxford.—WARTON.

[6] This verse is taken from the long lost BELLEROPHON, a tragedy by Euripides. It is preserved by Suidas in his Lexicon, Voc. Οἴμοι II. p. 666, where the reading is, θνητά τοι πεπονθαμεν.—BURNEY. [The meaning is, Alas! but why should I say *alas*? we have only suffered the common lot of mortality! —ED.]

I have ever since seemed to myself broken off from mankind; a kind of solitary wanderer in the wild of life, without any direction, or fixed point of view; a gloomy gazer on the world to which I have little relation. Yet I would endeavour, by the help of you and your brother, to supply the want of closer union, by friendship; and hope to have long the pleasure of being, dear sir, most affectionately yours, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. WARTON.

"(London), 24th Dec. 1754.

"DEAR SIR,—I am sat down to answer your kind letter, though I know not whether I shall direct it so as that it may reach you; the miscarriage of it will be no great matter, as I have nothing to send but thanks, of which I owe you many, yet if a few should be lost, I shall amply find them in my own mind; and professions of respect, of which the profession will easily be renewed while the respect continues: and the same causes which first produced can hardly fail to preserve it. Pray let me know, however, whether my letter finds its way to you.

"Poor dear Collins!—Let me know whether you think it would give him pleasure if I should write to him. *I have often been near his state*[1], and therefore have it in great commiseration.

"I sincerely wish you the usual pleasures of this joyous season, and more than the usual pleasures, those of contemplation on the great event which this festival commemorates. I am, dear sir, your most affectionate and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

In 1755 we behold him to great advantage; his degree of master of arts conferred upon him, his Dictionary published, his correspondence animated, his benevolence exercised.

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. WARTON.

"(London), 1 Feb. 1755.

"DEAR SIR,—I wrote to you some weeks ago, but believe did not direct accurately, and therefore know not whether you had my letter. I would, likewise, write to your brother, but know not where to find him. I now begin to see land, after having wandered, according to Mr. Warburton's phrase, in this vast sea of words. What reception I shall meet with on the shore, I know not; whether the sound of bells, and acclamations

[1] [See *ante*, p. 3.—ED.]

of the people, which Ariosto talks of in his last canto, or a general murmur of dislike, I know not: whether I shall find upon the coast a Calypso that will court, or a Polypheme that will resist. But if Polypheme comes, have at his eye! I hope, however, the criticks will let me be at peace; for though I do not much fear their skill and strength, I am a little afraid of myself, and would not willingly feel so much ill-will in my bosom as literary quarrels are apt to excite.

"Mr. Baretti is about a work for which he is in great want of Crescimbeni, which you may have again when you please.

"There is nothing considerable done or doing among us here. We are not perhaps as innocent as villagers, but most of us seem to be as idle. I hope, however, you are busy; and should be glad to know what you are doing. I am, dearest sir, your humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. WARTON.

"(London), 4 Feb. 1755.

"DEAR SIR,—I received your letter this day, with great sense of the favour that has been done me [1]; for which I return my most sincere thanks; and entreat you to pay to Mr. Wise such returns as I ought to make for so much kindness so little deserved.

"I sent Mr. Wise the Lexicon, and afterwards wrote to him; but know not whether he had either the book or letter. Be so good as to contrive to inquire.

"But why does my dear Mr. Warton tell me nothing of himself? Where hangs the new volume[2]? Can I help? Let not the past labour be lost, for want of a little more; but snatch what time you can from the hall, and the pupils, and the coffee-house, and the parks[3], and complete your design. I am, dear sir, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. WARTON.

"(London), 13 Feb. 1755.

"DEAR SIR,—I had a letter last week from Mr. Wise, but have yet heard nothing from you, nor know in what state my affair[4] stands; of which I beg you to inform me, if you can to-morrow, by the return of the post.

"Mr. Wise sends me word, that he has not had the Finnick

[1] His degree had now past, according to the usual form, the suffrages of the heads of colleges; but was not yet finally granted by the university. It was carried without a single dissentient voice.—WARTON.

[2] On Spenser.—WARTON.

[3] [The walks near Oxford so called.—ED.]

[4] Of the degree.—WARTON.

Lexicon yet, which I sent some time ago; and if he has it not, you must inquire after it. However, do not let your letter stay for that.

"Your brother, who is a better correspondent than you, and not much better, sends me word that your pupils keep you in college: but do they keep you from writing too? Let them, at least, give you time to write to, dear sir, your most affectionate, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. WARTON.

"(London), Feb. 1755.

DEAR SIR,—Dr. King[1] was with me a few minutes before your letter; this, however, is the first instance in which your kind intention to me have ever been frustrated[2]. I have now the full effect of your care and benevolence; and am far from thinking it a slight honour, or a small advantage; since it will put the enjoyment of your conversation more frequently in the power of, dear sir, your most obliged and affectionate

"SAM. JOHNSON.

"P.S. I have enclosed a letter to the vice-chancellor[3], which you will read; and, if you like it, seal and give him."

As the publick will doubtless be pleased to see the whole progress of this well-earned academical honour, I shall insert the Chancellor of Oxford's letter to the university[4], the diploma, and Johnson's letter of thanks to the vice-chancellor.

[1] Principal of Saint Mary Hall at Oxford. He brought with him the diploma from Oxford.—WARTON. [Born in 1685. Entered of Baliol in 1701. D.C.L. 1715, and Principal of St. Mary Hall in 1718. In 1722 he was a candidate for the representation of the university in parliament, on the tory interest; but was defeated. He died in 1763. He was a wit and a scholar, and, in particular, celebrated for his latinity; highly obnoxious to the Hanoverian party, and the idol of the Jacobites. It appears from his Memoirs, lately published, that he was one of those who was intrusted with the knowledge of the Pretender's being in London in the latter end of the reign of George the Second, where Dr. King was introduced to him. In the *memoirs*, the year is stated to have been 1756, but there is reason to suspect that this is an error of the transcriber or the press, for the Pretender's visit is elsewhere said to have been in 1750.—ED.]

[2] I suppose Johnson means that my *kind intention* of being the *first* to give him the good news of the degree being granted was *frustrated*, because Dr. King brought it before my intelligence arrived.—WARTON.

[3] Dr. Huddesford, President of Trinity College.—WARTON.

[4] Extracted from the Convocation Register, Oxford.—BOSWELL.

TO THE REV. DR. HUDDESFORD, *Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford; to be communicated to the heads of houses, and proposed in convocation.*

"Grosvenor-street, 4 Feb. 1755.

"MR. VICE-CHANCELLOR, AND GENTLEMEN,—Mr. Samuel Johnson, who was formerly of Pembroke College, having very eminently distinguished himself by the publication of a series of essays, excellently calculated to form the manners of the people, and in which the cause of religion and morality is every where maintained by the strongest powers of argument and language; and who shortly intends to publish a Dictionary of the English Tongue, formed on a new plan, and executed with the greatest labour and judgement; I persuade myself that I shall act agreeable to the sentiments of the whole university, in desiring that it may be proposed in convocation to confer on him the degree of master of arts by diploma, to which I readily give my consent; and am, Mr. Vice-chancellor, and gentlemen, your affectionate friend and servant, "ARRAN."

"DIPLOMA MAGISTRI JOHNSON. Term Hilarii. 1755.

"*CANCELLARIUS, Magistri et Scholares Universitatis Oxoniensis omnibus ad quos hoc presens scriptum pervenerit, salutem in Domino sempiternam.*

"*Cùm eum in finem gradus academici à majoribus nostris instituti fuerint, ut viri ingenio et doctrinâ præstantes titulis quoque præter cæteros insignirentur; cumque vir doctissimus* Samuel Johnson *è Collegio Pembrochiensi, scriptis suis popularium mores informantibus dudum literato orbi innotuerit; quin et linguæ patriæ tum ornandæ tum stabiliendæ (Lexicon scilicet Anglicanum summo studio, summo à se judicio congestum propediem editurus) etiam nunc utilissimam impendat operam; nos igitur Cancellarius, Magistri, et Scholares antedicti, nè virum de literis humanioribus optimè meritum diutius inhonoratum prætereamus, in solenni convocatione Doctorum, Magistrorum, Regentium, et non Regentium, decimo die mensis Februarii Anno Domini Millesimo Septingentesimo Quinquagesimo quinto habitâ, præfatum virum* Samuelem Johnson *(conspirantibus omnium suffragiis) Magistrum in Artibus renunciavimus et constituimus; eumque, virtute præsentis diplomatis, singulis juribus privilegiis et honoribus ad istum gradum quàquà pertinentibus frui et gaudere jussimus.*

"*In cujus rei testimonium sigillum Universitatis Oxoniensis præsentibus apponi fecimus.*

"*Datum in Domo nostræ Convocationis die* 20° *mensis Feb. Anno Dom. prædicto.*

"*Diploma supra scriptum per Registrarium lectum erat, et ex decreto venerabilis Domûs communi Universitatis sigillo munitum*[1]."

"*Londini.* 4*to Cal. Mart.* 1755.

"VIRO REVERENDO [GEORGIO] HUDDESFORD, S. T. P. UNIVERSITATIS OXONIENSIS VICE-CANCELLARIO DIGNISSIMO, S. P. D.

"SAM. JOHNSON[2].

"*Ingratus planè et tibi et mihi videar, nisi quanto me gaudio affecerint, quos nuper mihi honores (te credo, auctore), decrevit Senatus Academicus, literarum, quo tamen nihil levius, officio, significem; ingratus etiam, nisi comitatem, quâ vir eximius*[3] *mihi vestri testimonium amoris in manus tradidit, agnoscam et laudem. Si quid est, undè rei tam gratæ accedat gratia, hoc ipso magis mihi placet, quod eo tempore in ordines Academicos denuò cooptatus sim, quo tuam imminuere auctoritatem, famamque Oxonii lædere, omnibus modis conantur homines vafri, nec tamen acuti: quibus ego, prout viro umbratico licuit, semper restiti, semper restiturus. Qui enim, inter has rerum procellas, vel tibi vel Academiæ defuerit, illum virtuti et literis, sibique et posteris, defuturum existimo. Vale.*"

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. WARTON.

"(London), 20th March, 1755.

"Dear sir,—After I received my diploma, I wrote you a letter of thanks, with a letter to the Vice-chancellor, and sent another to Mr. Wise; but have heard from nobody since, and begin to think myself forgotten. It is true, I sent you a double letter, and you may fear an expensive correspondent; but I would have taken it kindly, if you had returned it treble: and what is a double letter to a *petty king*, that having *fellowship and fines*, can sleep without a *modus in his head*[4]?

"Dear Mr. Warton, let me hear from you, and tell me something, I care not what, so I hear it but from you. Something

[1] The original is in my possession.—Boswell.

[2] The superscription of this letter was not quite correct in the early editions of this work. It is here given from Dr. Johnson's original letter, now before me.—Malone.

[3] We may conceive what a high gratification it must have been to Johnson to receive his diploma from the hands of the great Dr. King, whose principles were so congenial with his own.—Boswell. [The reader will see in the preceding note, p. 266, why Mr. Boswell calls this gentleman the *great* Dr. King. —Ed.]

[4] The words in Italicks are allusions to passages in Mr. Warton's poem, called "*The Progress of Discontent*," now lately published.—Warton.

I will tell you:—I hope to see my Dictionary bound and lettered next week;—*vastâ mole superbus*. And I have a great mind to come to Oxford at Easter; but you will not invite me. Shall I come uninvited, or stay here where nobody perhaps would miss me if I went? A hard choice! But such is the world to, dear sir, yours, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

[The following extract of a letter from Mr. Warton to his brother will show his first sentiments on this great work: ED.

"19th April, 1755. Mem. of Dr. W. p. 230.

"The Dictionary is arrived; the preface is noble. There is a grammar prefixed, and the history of the language is pretty full; but you may plainly perceive strokes of laxity and indolence. They are two most unwieldy volumes. I have written him an invitation. I fear his preface will disgust, by the expression of his consciousness of superiority, and of his contempt of patronage. The Rawlinson benefaction[1] won't do for Johnson, which is this—a professorship of 80*l.* per annum, which is not to take place these forty years; a fellowship to Hertford College, which is too ample for them to receive agreeably to Newton's statutes; and a fellowship to St. John's College. Neither of the last are to take place these forty years."]

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. WARTON.

"(London), 25th March, 1755.

"DEAR SIR,—Though not to write, when a man can write so well, is an offence sufficiently heinous, yet I shall pass it by. I am very glad that the Vice-Chancellor was pleased with my note. I shall impatiently expect you at London, that we may consider what to do next. I intend in the winter to open a *Bibliotheque*, and remember, that you are to subscribe a sheet a year: let us try, likewise, if we can persuade your brother to subscribe another. My book is now coming *in luminis oras*. What will be its fate I know not, nor think much, because thinking is to no purpose. It must stand the censure of the *great vulgar and the small*; of those that understand it, and that understand it not. But in all this, I suffer not alone; every writer has the same difficulties, and, perhaps, every writer talks of them more than he thinks.

[1] [By this, I suppose, is meant the Anglo-Saxon professorship which was founded in 1750, but did not take effect before 1795, exactly forty years from the date of this letter.—HALL.]

"You will be pleased to make my compliments to all my friends; and be so kind, at every idle hour, as to remember; dear sir, yours, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

Dr. Adams told me, that this scheme of a *Bibliotheque* was a serious one: for upon his visiting him one day, he found his parlour floor covered with parcels of foreign and English literary journals, and he told Dr. Adams he meant to undertake a Review. "How, sir (said Dr. Adams), can you think of doing it alone? All branches of knowledge must be considered in it. Do you know Mathematicks? Do you know Natural History?" Johnson answered, "Why, sir, I must do as well as I can. My chief purpose is to give my countrymen a view of what is doing in literature upon the continent; and I shall have, in a good measure, the choice of my subject, for I shall select such books as I best understand." Dr. Adams suggested, that as Dr. Maty[1] had just then finished his *Bibliotheque Britannique*, which was a well-executed work, giving foreigners an account of British publications, he might, with great advantage, assume him as an assistant. "*He* (said Johnson), the little black dog! I'd throw him into the Thames." The scheme, however, was dropped.

In one of his little memorandum books I find the following hints for his intended Review or Literary Journal:

[1] [Matthew Maty, M.D. and F.R.S. He was born in Holland in 1718, and educated at Leyden, but he came in 1740 to settle in England. He became secretary to the Royal Society in 1765, on the resignation of Dr. Birch, and in 1772, principal librarian of the British Museum. Maty being the friend and admirer of Lord Chesterfield, whose works he afterwards published, would, as Dr. Hall observes, particularly at this period, have little recommendation to the good opinion of the lexicographer; but his *Journal Britannique* is mentioned by Mr. Gibbon in a tone very different from Dr. Johnson's. "This humble though useful labour, which had once been dignified by the genius of Bayle and the learning of Le Clerc, was not disgraced by the taste, the knowledge, and the judgment of Maty. His style is pure and eloquent, and in his virtues or even in his defects he may be reckoned as one of the last disciples of the school of Fontenelle."—*Gibbon's Misc. Works.* Dr. Maty died in 1776.—ED.]

"*The Annals of Literature, foreign as well as domestick.* Imitate Le Clerc—Bayle—Barbeyrac. Infelicity of Journals in England. 'Works of the learned.' We cannot take in all. Sometimes copy from foreign Journalists. Always tell."

"DR. JOHNSON TO DR. BIRCH.

"29th March, 1755.

"SIR,—I have sent some parts of my Dictionary, such as were at hand, for your inspection. The favour which I beg is, that if you do not like them, you will say nothing. I am, sir, your most affectionate humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

"Norfolk-street, 23th April, 1755.

"SIR,—The part of your Dictionary which you have favoured me with the sight of has given me such an idea of the whole, that I most sincerely congratulate the publick upon the acquisition of a work long wanted, and now executed with an industry, accuracy, and judgement, equal to the importance of the subject. You might, perhaps, have chosen one in which your genius would have appeared to more advantage, but you could not have fixed upon any other in which your labours would have done such substantial service to the present age and to posterity. I am glad that your health has supported the application necessary to the performance of so vast a task; and can undertake to promise you as one (though perhaps the only) reward of it, the approbation and thanks of every well-wisher to the honour of the English language. I am, with the greatest regard, sir, your most faithful, and most affectionate humble servant, "THO. BIRCH."

Mr. Charles Burney, who has since distinguished himself so much in the science of musick, and obtained a doctor's degree from the University of Oxford, had been driven from the capital by bad health, and was now residing at Lynne Regis in Norfolk. He had been so much delighted with Johnson's Rambler, and the plan of his Dictionary, that when the great work was announced in the newspapers as nearly finished, he wrote to Dr. Johnson, begging to be informed when and in what manner his Dictionary would be published; entreating,

if it should be by subscription, or he should have any books at his own disposal, to be favoured with six copies for himself and friends.

In answer to this application, Dr. Johnson wrote the following letter, of which (to use Dr. Burney's own words) "if it be remembered that it was written to an obscure young man, who at this time had not much distinguished himself even in his own profession, but whose name could never have reached the authour of The Rambler, the politeness and urbanity may be opposed to some of the stories which have been lately circulated of Dr. Johnson's natural rudeness and ferocity."

"TO MR. BURNEY, LYNNE REGIS, NORFOLK.

"Gough-square, Fleet-street, 8 April, 1755.

"SIR,—If you imagine that by delaying my answer I intended to show any neglect of the notice with which you have favoured me, you will neither think justly of yourself nor of me. Your civilities were offered with too much elegance not to engage attention; and I have too much pleasure in pleasing men like you, not to feel very sensibly the distinction you have bestowed upon me.

"Few consequences of my endeavours to please or to benefit mankind have delighted me more than your friendship thus voluntarily offered, which now I have it I hope to keep, because I hope to continue to deserve it.

"I have no Dictionaries to dispose of for myself, but shall be glad to have you direct your friends to Mr. Dodsley, because it was by his recommendation that I was employed in the work.

"When you have leisure to think again upon me, let me be favoured with another letter; and another yet, when you have looked into my Dictionary. If you find faults, I shall endeavour to mend them; if you find none, I shall think you blinded by kind partiality: but to have made you partial in his favour, will very much gratify the ambition of, sir, your most obliged and most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

Mr. Andrew Millar, bookseller in the Strand, took the principal charge of conducting the publication of Johnson's Dictionary; and as the patience of the pro-

prietors was repeatedly tried and almost exhausted, by their expecting that the work would be completed, within the time which Johnson had sanguinely supposed, the learned authour was often goaded to despatch, more especially as he had received all the copy money, by different drafts, a considerable time before he had finished his task. When the messenger who carried the last sheet to Millar returned, Johnson asked him, "Well, what did he say?"—"Sir (answered the messenger), he said, thank GOD I have done with him."—"I am glad (replied Johnson with a smile) that he thanks GOD for any thing[1]." It is remarkable, that those with whom Johnson chiefly contracted for his literary labours were Scotchmen, Mr. Millar and Mr. Strahan. Millar, though himself no great judge of literature, had good sense enough to have for his friends very able men, to give him their opinion and advice in the purchase of copyright; the consequence of which was his acquiring a very large fortune with great liberality. Johnson said of him, "I respect Millar, sir; he has raised the price of literature." The same praise may be justly given to Panckoucke, the eminent bookseller of Paris. Mr. Strahan's liberality, judgment, and success, are well known.

"TO BENNET LANGTON, ESQ. AT LANGTON.

"6 May, 1755.

"SIR,—It has been long observed, that men do not suspect faults which they do not commit; your own elegance of manners, and punctuality of complaisance, did not suffer you to impute to me that negligence of which I was guilty, and [for[2]] which I have not since atoned. I received both your letters, and re-

[1] Sir John Hawkins (*Life*, p. 341), inserts two notes as having passed formerly between Andrew Millar and Johnson, to the above effect. I am assured this was not the case. In the way of incidental remark it was a pleasant play of raillery. To have deliberately written notes in such terms would have been morose.—BOSWELL.

[2] The word "*for*" has here probably slipped out by error of the transcriber or the press. See the word *atone*, in Johnson's Dictionary.—ED.]

ceived them with pleasure proportioned to the esteem which so short an acquaintance strongly impressed, and which I hope to confirm by nearer knowledge, though I am afraid that gratification will be for a time withheld.

"I have, indeed, published my book[1], of which I beg to know your father's judgment, and yours; and I have now staid long enough to watch its progress in the world. It has, you see, no patrons, and I think has yet had no opponents, except the criticks of the coffee-house, whose outcries are soon dispersed into the air, and are thought on no more; from this, therefore, I am at liberty, and think of taking the opportunity of this interval to make an excursion, and why not then into Lincolnshire? or, to mention a stronger attraction, why not to dear Mr. Langton? I will give the true reason, which I know you will approve:—I have a mother more than eighty years old, who has counted the days to the publication of my book, in hopes of seeing me; and to her, if I can disengage myself here, I resolve to go[2].

"As I know, dear sir, that to delay my visit for a reason like this, will not deprive me of your esteem, I beg it may not lessen your kindness. I have very seldom received an offer of friendship which I so earnestly desire to cultivate and mature. I shall rejoice to hear from you, till I can see you, and will see you as soon as I can; for when the duty that calls me to Lichfield is discharged, my inclination will carry me to Langton. I shall delight to hear the ocean roar[3], or see the stars twinkle, in the company of men to whom nature does not spread her volume to utter her voice in vain.

"Do not, dear sir, make the slowness of this letter a precedent for delay, or imagine that I approved the incivility that I have committed; for I have known you enough to love you, and sincerely to wish a further knowledge; and I assure you once more, that to live in a house that contains such a father and such a son, will be accounted a very uncommon degree of pleasure, by, dear sir, your most obliged, and most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. WARTON.

"(London), 13 May, 1755.

"DEAR SIR,—I am grieved that you should think me capable

[1] His Dictionary.—BOSWELL.

[2] [It is to be feared that this duty was not performed: see *post*, January, 1759.—ED.]

[3] [This must refer to some general allusion in Mr. Langton's letters, for the village of Langton is ten or twelve miles from the coast.—ED.]

of neglecting your letters; and beg you will never admit any such suspicion again. I purpose to come down next week, if you shall be there; or any other week, that shall be more agreeable to you. Therefore let me know. I can stay this visit but a week; but intend to make preparations for longer stay next time; being resolved not to lose sight of the university. How goes Apollonius[1]? Don't let him be forgotten. Some things of this kind must be done, to keep us up. Pay my compliments to Mr. Wise, and all my other friends. I think to come to Kettel-Hall. I am, sir, your most affectionate, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON.

["DR. JOHNSON TO MR. RICHARDSON[2].

"17 May, 1755.

"DEAR SIR,—As you were the rst that gave me notice of this paragraph, I send it to you, with a few little notes, which I wish you would read. It is well, when men of learning and penetration busy themselves in these inquiries, but what is their idleness is my business. Help, indeed, now comes too late for me, when a large part of my book has passed the press.

"I shall be glad if these strictures appear to you not unwarrantable; for whom should he, who toils in settling a language, desireto please but him who is adorning it? I hope your new book is printing. *Macte novâ virtute.* I am, dear sir, most respectfully and most affectionately, your humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. WARTON.

"(London), 10 June, 1755.

"DEAR SIR,—It is strange how many things will happen to intercept every pleasure, though it (be) only that of two friends meeting together. I have promised myself every day to inform you when you might expect me at Oxford, and have not been able to fix a time. This time, however, is, I think, at last come; and I promise myself to repose in Kettel-hall, one of the first nights of the next week. I am afraid my stay with you cannot be long; but what is the inference? We must endeavour to make it cheerful. I wish your brother could meet us, that we might go and drink tea with Mr. Wise in a body. I hope he will be at Oxford, or at his nest of British and Saxon antiquities[3]. I shall expect to see Spenser finished, and many other things begun. Dodsley is gone to visit the Dutch. The

[1] A translation of Apollonius Rhodius was now intended by Mr. Warton.—WARTON.

[2] [Communicated by Dr. Harwood.—Ed.]

[3] At Ellsfield, a village three miles from Oxford.—WARTON.

Dictionary sells well. The rest of the world goes on as it did. Dear sir, your most affectionate, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. WARTON.

"(London), 24 June, 1755.

"DEAR SIR,—To talk of coming to you, and not yet to come, has an air of trifling which I would not willingly have among you; and which, I believe, you will not willingly impute to me, when I have told you, that since my promise, two of our partners[1] are dead, and that I was solicited to suspend my excursion till we could recover from our confusion.

"I have not laid aside my purpose; for every day makes me more impatient of staying from you. But death, you know, hears not supplications, nor pays any regard to the convenience of mortals. I hope now to see you next week; but next week is but another name for to-morrow, which has been noted for promising and deceiving. I am, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. WARTON.

"(London), 7 Aug. 1755.

"DEAR SIR,—I told you that among the manuscripts are some things of Sir Thomas More. I beg you to pass an hour in looking on them, and procure a transcript of the ten or twenty first lines of each, to be compared with what I have; that I may know whether they are yet published. The manuscripts are these:

"Catalogue of Bodl. MS. pag. 122. F. 3. Sir Thomas More.

"1. Fall of angels. 2. Creation and fall of mankind. 3. Determination of the Trinity for the rescue of mankind. 4. Five lectures of our Saviour's passion. 5. Of the institution of the Sacrament, three lectures. 6. How to receive the blessed body of our Lord sacramentally. 7. Neomenia, the new moon. 8. *De tristitia, tædio, pavore, et oratione Christi ante captionem ejus.*

"Catalogue, pag. 154. Life of Sir Thomas More. *Qu.* Whether Roper's? Page 363. *De resignatione Magni Sigilli in manus regis per D. Thomam Morum.* Page 364. *Mori Defensio Moriæ.*

"If you procure the young gentleman in the library to write out what you think fit to be written, I will send to Mr. Prince the bookseller to pay him what you shall think proper.

"Be pleased to make my compliments to Mr. Wise, and all my friends. I am, sir, your affectionate, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

[1] Booksellers concerned in his Dictionary.—WARTON. [Mr. Paul Knapton died on the 12th, and Mr. Thomas Longman on the 18th June, 1755.—ED.]

The Dictionary, with a Grammar and History of the English Language, being now at length published, in two volumes folio, the world contemplated with wonder so stupendous a work achieved by one man, while other countries had thought such undertakings fit only for whole academies. Vast as his powers were, I cannot but think that his imagination deceived him, when he supposed that by constant application he might have performed the task in three years. Let the Preface be attentively perused, in which is given, in a clear, strong, and glowing style, a comprehensive, yet particular view of what he had done; and it will be evident, that the time he employed upon it was comparatively short. I am unwilling to swell my book with long quotations from what is in every body's hands, and I believe there are few prose compositions in the English language that are read with more delight, or are more impressed upon the memory, than that preliminary discourse. One of its excellencies has always struck me with peculiar admiration; I mean the perspicuity with which he has expressed abstract scientifick notions. As an instance of this, I shall quote the following sentence: "When the radical idea branches out into parallel ramifications, how can a consecutive series be formed of senses in their own nature collateral[1]?" We have here an example of what has been often said, and I believe with justice, that there is for every thought a certain nice adaptation of words which none other could equal, and which, when a man has been so fortunate as to hit, he has attained, in that particular case, the perfection of language.

[1] [Mr. Boswell's apprehension was much clearer than, or his ideas of perspicuity very different from those of the editor, who is not ashamed to confess that he does not understand this *perspicuous* passage. There seems, moreover, to be something like a contradiction in the terms: how can *parallels* be said to *branch* out?—ED.]

The extensive reading which was absolutely necessary for the accumulation of authorities, and which alone may account for Johnson's retentive mind being enriched with a very large and various store of knowledge and imagery, must have occupied several years. The Preface furnishes an eminent instance of a double talent, of which Johnson was fully conscious. Sir Joshua Reynolds heard him say, "There are two things which I am confident I can do very well: one is an introduction to any literary work, stating what it is to contain, and how it should be executed in the most perfect manner: the other is a conclusion, showing from various causes why the execution has not been equal to what the authour promised to himself and to the publick."

How should puny scribblers be abashed and disappointed, when they find him displaying a perfect theory of lexicographical excellence, yet at the same time candidly and modestly allowing that he "had not satisfied his own expectations." Here was a fair occasion for the exercise of Johnson's modesty, when he was called upon to compare his own arduous performance, not with those of other individuals (in which case his inflexible regard to truth would have been violated had he affected diffidence), but with speculative perfection; as he, who can outstrip all his competitors in the race, may yet be sensible of his deficiency when he runs against time. Well might he say, that "the English Dictionary was written with little assistance of the learned;" for he told me, that the only aid which he received was a paper containing twenty etymologies, sent to him by a person then unknown, who he was afterwards informed was Dr. Pearce, Bishop of Rochester. The etymologies, though they exhibit learning and judgement, are not, I think, entitled to the first praise

amongst the various parts of this immense work. The definitions have always appeared to me such astonishing proofs of acuteness of intellect and precision of language, as indicate a genius of the highest rank. This it is which marks the superiour excellence of Johnson's Dictionary over others equally or even more voluminous, and must have made it a work of much greater mental labour than mere Lexicons, or *Word-Books*, as the Dutch call them. They, who will make the experiment of trying how they can define a few words of whatever nature, will soon be satisfied of the unquestionable justice of this observation, which I can assure my readers is founded upon much study, and upon communication with more minds than my own.

A few of his definitions must be admitted to be erroneous. Thus, *Windward* and *Leeward*, though directly of opposite meaning, are defined identically the same way—[*toward the wind*] [1]; as to which inconsiderable specks it is enough to observe, that his Preface announces that he was aware there might be many such in so immense a work; nor was he at all disconcerted when an instance was pointed out to him. A lady once asked him how he came to define *Pastern* the *knee* of a horse: instead of making an elaborate defence, as she expected, he at once answered, "Ignorance, madam, pure ignorance." His definition of *Network*—[*any thing reticulated or decussated at equal distances, with interstices between the intersections*]—has been often quoted with sportive malignity, as obscuring a thing in itself very plain. But to these frivolous censures no other answer is necessary than that with which we are furnished by his own Preface. "To explain, requires

[1] He owns in his Preface the deficiency of the technical part of his work; and he said he should be much obliged to me for definitions of musical terms for his next edition, which he did not live to superintend.—BURNEY.

the use of terms less abstruse than that which is to be explained, and such terms cannot always be found. For as nothing can be proved but by supposing something intuitively known, and evident without proof, so nothing can be defined but by the use of words too plain to admit of definition. Sometimes easier words are changed into harder; as *burial*, into *sepulture* or *interment*; *dry*, into *desiccative*; *dryness* into *siccity* or *aridity*; *fit*, into *paroxysm*; for the *easiest* word, whatever it be, can never be translated into one more easy."

His introducing his own opinions, and even prejudices, under general definitions of words, while at the same time the original meaning of the words is not explained, and a few more, cannot be fully defended, and must be placed to the account of capricious and humorous indulgence. Such are

TORY [*a cant term, derived, I suppose, from an Irish word signifying a savage. One who adheres to the ancient constitution of the state and the apostolic hierarchy of the church of England: opposed to a Whig*].

WHIG [*the name of a faction*].

PENSION [*an allowance made to any one without an equivalent. In England it is generally understood to mean pay given to a state hireling for treason to his country*].

[PENSIONER, *a slave of state hired by a stipend to obey his master*].

OATS [*a grain which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland supports the people*].

EXCISE [*a hateful tax levied upon commodities, and adjudged not by the common judges of property, but by* WRETCHES *hired by those to whom excise is paid*[1]].

[1] The Commissioners of Excise being offended by this severe reflection, consulted Mr. Murray, then Attorney-General, to know whether redress could be legally obtained. I wished to have procured for my readers a copy of the opinion which he gave, and which may now be justly considered as history; but the mysterious secrecy of office it seems would not permit it. I am, however, informed, by very good authority, that its import was, that the passage might be considered as actionable; but that it would be more prudent in the board not to prosecute. Johnson never made the smallest alteration in this passage. We find he still retained his early prejudice against Excise; for in "The Idler,

Talking to me upon this subject when we were at Ashbourne in 1777, he mentioned a still stronger instance of the predominance of his private feelings in the composition of this work, than any now to be found in it. "You know, sir, Lord Gower forsook the old Jacobite interest. When I came to the word *Renegado*, after telling that it meant 'one who deserts to the enemy, a revolter,' I added, *Sometimes we*

No. 65," there is the following very extraordinary paragraph: "The authenticity of *Clarendon*'s history, though printed with the sanction of one of the first Universities of the world, had not an unexpected manuscript been happily discovered, would, with the help of factious credulity, have been brought into question, by the two lowest of all human beings, a Scribbler for a party, and a Commissioner of Excise." The persons to whom he alludes were Mr. John Oldmixon, and George Ducket, Esq.—BOSWELL. [The present Editor is more fortunate than Mr. Boswell, in being able (through the favour of Sir F. H. Doyle, now Deputy-Chairman of the Excise Board) to present the reader with a copy of the case submitted to Lord Mansfield and his opinion:

"CASE for the opinion of Mr. Attorney-General.

"Mr. Samuel Johnson has lately published a book entitled '*A Dictionary of the English Language, in which the words are deduced from their originals, and illustrated in their different significations by examples from the best writers. To which are prefixed, a History of the Language and an English Grammar.*'

"Under this title, EXCISE, are the following words:

"EXCISE, *n. s.* (Accijs, Dutch; Excisum, Latin.) A hateful tax levied upon commodities, and adjudged not by the common judges of property, but wretches hired by those to whom excise is paid.

"'*The people should pay a ratable tax for their shoes, and an excise for every thing which they should eat.*'—HAYWARD.

"'*Ambitious now to take excise*
Of a more fragrant paradise.'—CLEAVELAND.

"'*Excise . . . .*
With hundred rows of teeth, the shark exceeds,
And on all trades, like cassawar, she feeds.'—MARVEL.

"'*Can hire large houses, and oppress the poor by farmed excise.*'—DRYDEN's *Juvenal, Sat.* 3d.

"The author's definition being observed by the Commissioners of Excise, they desire the favour of your opinion.

"*Qu.* Whether it will not be considered as a libel, and if so, whether it is not proper to proceed against the author, printers, and publishers thereof, or any and which of them by information, or how otherwise?

"I am of opinion that it is a libel. But under all the circumstances, I should think it better to give him an opportunity of altering his definition; and, in case he do not, to threaten him with an information.

"29th Nov. 1755. "W. MURRAY."

Whether any such step was taken, Sir Francis Doyle has not been able to discover: probably not; but Johnson, in his own octavo abridgment of the Dictionary, had the good sense to omit the more offensive parts of the definitions of both EXCISE and PENSION. We have already seen (*ante*, p. 7) the probable motive of the attack on the *Excise*.—ED.]

say a GOWER[1]. Thus it went to the press: but the printer had more wit than I, and struck it out."

Let it, however, be remembered, that this indulgence does not display itself only in sarcasm towards others, but sometimes in playful allusion to the notions commonly entertained of his own laborious task. Thus: "*Grub-street*, the name of a street in London, much inhabited by writers of small histories, *dictionaries*, and temporary poems; whence any mean production is called *Grub-street*."—"*Lexicographer*, a writer of dictionaries, a *harmless drudge*[2]."

At the time when he was concluding his very eloquent Preface, Johnson's mind appears to have been in such a state of depression, that we cannot contemplate without wonder the vigorous and splendid thoughts which so highly distinguish that performance. "I (says he) may surely be contented without the praise of perfection, which if I could obtain in this gloom of solitude, what would it avail me? I have protracted my work till most of those whom I wished to please have sunk into the grave; and success and miscarriage are empty sounds. I therefore dismiss it with frigid tranquillity, having little to fear or hope from censure or from praise." That this indifference was rather a temporary than an habitual feeling, appears, I think, from his letters to Mr. Warton; and however he may have been affected for the moment, certain it is that the honours which his great work procured him, both at home and abroad, were very grateful to him. His friend the

[1] [Lord Gower, after a long opposition to the whig ministry (which was looked upon as equivalent to *Jacobitism*), accepted, in 1742, the office of Privy-Seal, and was the object of much censure both with Whigs and Tories. Sir Charles H. Williams ironically calls him "*Hanoverian* Gower;" but it is probable that Johnson's aversion to Lord Gower arose out of something more personal; perhaps the disappointment about Appleby school: see *ante*, p. 103.—ED.]

[2] [A writer of dictionaries, who should admit such reflections as those on the *Excise*, *Lord Gower*, &c., could hardly hope to pass as a *harmless* drudge.—ED.]

Earl of Corke and Orrery[1], being at Florence, presented it to the *Academia della Crusca*. That Academy sent Johnson their *Vocabolario*, and the French Academy sent him their *Dictionnaire*, which Mr. Langton had the pleasure to convey to him.

It must undoubtedly seem strange, that the conclusion of his Preface should be expressed in terms so desponding, when it is considered that the authour was then only in his forty-sixth year. But we must ascribe its gloom to that miserable dejection of spirits to which he was constitutionally subject, and which was aggravated by the death of his wife two years before. I have heard it ingeniously observed by a lady of rank and elegance, that "his melancholy was then at its meridian." It pleased GOD to grant him almost thirty years of life after this time; and once when he was in a placid frame of mind, he was obliged to own to me that he had enjoyed happier days, and had many more friends, since that gloomy hour, than before.

It is a sad saying, that "most of those whom he wished to please had sunk into the grave;" and his case at forty-five was singularly unhappy, unless the circle of his friends was very narrow. I have often thought, that as longevity is generally desired, and I believe generally expected, it would be wise to be continually adding to the number of our friends, that the loss of some may be supplied by others. Friendship, "the wine of life," should, like a well-stocked cellar, be thus continually renewed; and it is consolatory to think, that although we can seldom add what will equal the generous *first growths* of our youth, yet friendship becomes insensibly old in much less time than is commonly imagined, and not many years are required to make it very mellow and plea-

[1] [See *ante*, p. 226.—ED.]

sant. *Warmth* will, no doubt, make a considerable difference. Men of affectionate temper and bright fancy will coalesce a great deal sooner than those who are cold and dull.

The proposition which I have now endeavoured to illustrate was, at a subsequent period of his life, the opinion of Johnson himself. He said to Sir Joshua Reynolds, "If a man does not make new acquaintance as he advances through life, he will soon find himself left alone. A man, sir, should keep his friendship *in constant repair*."

The celebrated Mr. Wilkes, whose notions and habits of life were very opposite to his, but who was ever eminent for literature and vivacity, sallied forth with a little *jeu d'esprit* upon the following passage in his Grammar of the English Tongue, prefixed to the Dictionary: "*H* seldom, perhaps never, begins any but the first syllable." In an essay printed in "the Publick Advertiser," this lively writer enumerated many instances in opposition to this remark; for example: "The authour of this observation must be a man of a quick *appre-hension*, and of a most *compre-hensive* genius." The position is undoubtedly expressed with too much latitude.

This light sally, we may suppose, made no great impression on our Lexicographer; for we find that he did not alter the passage till many years afterwards [1].

He had the pleasure of being treated in a very different manner by his old pupil Mr. Garrick, in the following complimentary Epigram:

ON JOHNSON'S DICTIONARY.

"Talk of war with a Briton, he 'll boldly advance,
That one English soldier will beat ten of France;

[1] In the third edition, published in 1773, he left out the words *perhaps never*, and added the following paragraph:

"It sometimes begins middle or final syllables in words compounded, as *block-head*, or derived from the Latin, as *compre-hended*."—BOSWELL.

Would we alter the boast from the sword to the pen,
Our odds are still greater, still greater our men;
In the deep mines of science though Frenchmen may toil,
Can their strength be compared to Locke, Newton, and Boyle?
Let them rally their heroes, send forth all their pow'rs,
Their verse-men and prose-men, then match them with ours!
First Shakspeare and Milton, like gods in the fight,
Have put their whole drama and epick to flight;
In satires, epistles, and odes, would they cope,
Their numbers retreat before Dryden and Pope;
And Johnson, well-arm'd like a hero of yore,
Has beat forty French[1], and will beat forty more[2]!"

Johnson this year gave at once a proof of his benevolence, quickness of apprehension, and admirable art of composition, in the assistance which he gave to Mr. Zachariah Williams, father of the blind lady whom he had humanely received under his roof. Mr. Williams had followed the profession of physick in Wales; but having a very strong propensity to the study of natural philosophy, had made many ingenious advances towards a discovery of the longitude, and repaired to London in hopes of obtaining the great parliamentary reward[3]. He failed of success; but Johnson having made himself master of his principles and experiments, wrote for him a pamphlet, published in quarto, with the following title: "An Account of an Attempt to ascertain the Longitude at Sea, by an exact Theory of the Variation of the Magnetical Needle; with a Table of the Variations at the most remarkable Cities in Europe, from the year 1660 to 1860 †." To diffuse it more extensively, it was accompanied with an Italian translation on the opposite page, which it is supposed

[1] The number of the French Academy employed in settling their language. —Boswell.

[2] [This compliment is creditable to Garrick's placability, if we are to believe that he took to himself the character of Prospero in the Rambler of the 15th Feb. 1752 (see *ante*, p. 192); but it surely is not a very happy effort of wit. "*Well arm'd like a hero of yore*," and "*will beat forty more*," have little meaning, and are awkward expletives, added, it would seem, merely because they *rhymed*. —Ed.]

[3] [Mr. Williams, as early as 1721, persuaded himself that he had discovered the means of ascertaining the longitude, and he seems to have passed a long life in that delusion.—Ed.]

was the work of Signor Baretti [1], an Italian of considerable literature, who having come to England a few years before, had been employed in the capacity both of a language master and an authour, and formed an intimacy with Dr. Johnson. This pamphlet Johnson presented to the Bodleian Library [2]. On a blank leaf of it is pasted a paragraph cut out of a newspaper, containing an account of the death and character of Williams, plainly written by Johnson [3].

In July this year he had formed some scheme of mental improvement, the particular purpose of which does not appear. But we find in his "Prayers and Meditations," p. 25, a prayer entitled "On the Study of Philosophy, as an instrument of living;" and after it follows a note, "This study was not pursued."

On the 13th of the same month he wrote in his Journal the following scheme of life, for Sunday:

[1] This ingenious foreigner, who was a native of Piedmont, came to England about the year 1753, and died in London, May 5, 1789. A very candid and judicious account of him and his works, beginning with the words, "So much asperity," and written, it is believed, by a distinguished dignitary in the church, [Dr. Vincent, Dean of Westminster], may be found in the Gentleman's Magazine for that year, p. 469.—MALONE.

[2] When Dr. Johnson was with me at Oxford, in 1755, he gave to the Bodleian Library a thin quarto of twenty-one pages, a work in Italian, with an English translation on the opposite page. The English title-page is this: "An Account of an Attempt to ascertain the Longitude at Sea, by an exact Variation of the Magnetical Needle, &c. By Zachariah Williams. London, printed for Dodsley, 1755." The English translation, from the strongest internal marks, is unquestionably the work of Johnson. In a blank leaf, Johnson has written the age, and time of death, of the authour Z. Williams, as I have said above. On another blank leaf is pasted a paragraph from a newspaper, of the death and character of Williams, which is plainly written by Johnson. He was very anxious about placing this book in the Bodleian; and, for fear of any omission or mistake, he entered, in the great Catalogue, the title-page of it with his own hand.—WARTON.

In this statement there is a slight mistake. The English account, which was written by Johnson, was the *original*; the Italian was a *translation*, done by Baretti.—MALONE.

[3] "On Saturday the 12th [July, 1755], about twelve at night, died Mr. Zachariah Williams, in his eighty-third year, after an illness of eight months, in full possession of his mental faculties. He has been long known to philosophers and seamen for his skill in magnetism, and his proposal to ascertain the longitude by a peculiar system of the variation of the compass. He was a man of industry indefatigable, of conversation inoffensive, patient of adversity and disease, eminently sober, temperate, and pious; and worthy to have ended life with better fortune."

"Having lived" (as he with tenderness of conscience expresses himself)-" not without an habitual reverence for the Sabbath, yet without that attention to its religious duties which Christianity requires:"

"1. To rise early, and in order to it, to go to sleep early on Saturday.

"2. To use some extraordinary devotion in the morning.

"3. To examine the tenour of my life, and particularly the last week; and to mark my advances in religion, or recession from it.

"4. To read the Scripture methodically with such helps as are at hand.

"5. To go to church twice.

"6. To read books of Divinity, either speculative or practical.

"7. To instruct my family.

"8. To wear off by meditation any worldly soil contracted in the week [1]."

In 1756 Johnson found that the great fame of his Dictionary had not set him above the necessity of "making provision for the day that was passing over him." No royal or noble patron extended a munificent hand to give independence to the man who had conferred stability on the language of his country. We may feel indignant that there should have been such unworthy neglect; but we must, at the same time, congratulate ourselves, when we consider, that to this very neglect, operating to rouse the natural indolence of his constitution, we owe many valuable productions, which otherwise, perhaps, might never have appeared.

He had spent, during the progress of the work, the money for which he had contracted to write his Dictionary. We have seen that the reward of his labour was only fifteen hundred and seventy-five pounds; and when the expense of amanuenses and

[1] [In 1755 Johnson seems to have written for Mrs. Lenox the dedication to the Duke of Newcastle of her *Translation of Sully's Memoirs*.—Ed.]

paper, and other articles, are deducted, his clear profit was very inconsiderable. I once said to him, "I am sorry, sir, you did not get more for your Dictionary." His answer was, "I am sorry too. But it was very well. The booksellers are generous, liberal-minded men." He, upon all occasions, did ample justice to their character in this respect. He considered them as the patrons of literature; and, indeed, although they have eventually[1] been considerable gainers by his Dictionary, it is to them that we owe its having been undertaken and carried through at the risk of great expense, for they were not absolutely sure of being indemnified.

Hawk. p. 223.

Ed.

[In 1756, Mr. Garrick, ever disposed to help the afflicted, indulged Miss Williams with a benefit-play, that produced her two hundred pounds.] [Johnson, as might be expected, exerted his influence to swell the profits of this act of kindness, which indeed was probably intended by Garrick as a mark of regard as much to Johnson as to Miss Williams.]

["DR. JOHNSON TO MISS CARTER.

"Gough-square, 14th Jan. 1756.

Harwood.

"MADAM,—From the liberty of writing to you, if I have hitherto been deterred from the fear of your understanding, I am now encouraged to it from the confidence of your goodness.

"I am soliciting a benefit for Miss Williams, and beg that if you can by letters influence any in her favour (and who is there whom you cannot influence?) you will be pleased to patronize her on this occasion. Yet, for the time is short, and as you were not in town, I did not till this day remember that you might help us, and recollect how widely and how rapidly light is diffused.

"To every joy is appended a sorrow. The name of Miss Carter introduces the memory of Cave. Poor dear Cave! I owed him much; for to him I owe that I have known you. He died, I am afraid, unexpectedly to himself, yet surely unburthened

[1] [They seem to have been *immediately* considerable gainers, for a *second* folio edition was (if we may credit the title-page) published in the same year as the first—an extraordinary sale for so great and expensive a work.—ED.]

with any great crime, and for the positive duties of religion I have yet no right to condemn him for neglect.

"I am, with respect, which I neither owe nor pay to any other, madam, your most obedient and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

On the first day of this year we find, from his private devotions, that he had then recovered from sickness, and in February that his eye was restored to its use. The pious gratitude with which he acknowledges mercies upon every occasion is very edifying; as is the humble submission which he breathes, when it is the will of his heavenly Father to try him with afflictions. As such dispositions become the state of man here, and are the true effect of religious discipline, we cannot but venerate in Johnson one of the most exercised minds that our holy religion hath ever formed. If there be any thoughtless enough to suppose such exercise the weakness of a great understanding, let them look up to Johnson, and be convinced that what he so earnestly practised must have a rational foundation.

[The two next letters are melancholy evidence of the pecuniary distress in which he was at this period involved. It is afflicting to contemplate the author of the Rambler and the Dictionary reduced to such precarious means of existence as the casual profits from magazines and reviews, and subjected to all the evils and affronts of a state of penury; but it, at the same time, raises our admiration and esteem to recollect that even in this season of distress he continued to share his mite with Miss Williams, Mr. Levett, and the other objects of his charitable regard.] ED.

["DR. JOHNSON TO MR. RICHARDSON.

"Tuesday, 19th Feb. 1756. Rich. Cor. vol. 5. p 265.

"DEAR SIR,—I return you my sincerest thanks for the favour[1] which you were pleased to do me two nights ago.

[1] ["*This letter was written in consequence of Mr. Richardson's having given*

"Be pleased to accept of this little book [1], which is all that I have published this winter. The inflammation is come again into my eye, so that I can write very little. I am, sir, your most obliged and most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

Gent. Mag. vol. 58. p. 479.

["TO MR. RICHARDSON.

"Gough Square, 16th March, 1756.

"SIR,—I am obliged to entreat your assistance; I am now under an arrest for five pounds eighteen shillings. Mr. Strahan, from whom I should have received the necessary help in this case, is not at home, and I am afraid of not finding Mr. Millar. If you will be so good as to send me this sum, I will very gratefully repay you, and add it to all former obligations. I am, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"Sent six guineas [2]. Witness WILLIAM RICHARDSON."]

Mem. of Dr. Warton, p. 238.

["DR. JOHNSON TO DR. WARTON.

"15th April, 1756.

"DEAR SIR,—Though, when you and your brother were in town, you did not think my humble habitation worth a visit, yet I will not so far give way to sullenness as not to tell you that I have lately seen an octavo book [3] which I suspect to be yours, though I have not yet read above ten pages. That way of publishing, without acquainting your friends, is a wicked trick. However, I will not so far depend upon a mere conjecture as to charge you with a fraud which I cannot prove you to have committed.

"I should be glad to hear that you are pleased with your new situation [4]. You have now a kind of royalty, and are to be an-

bail for Dr. Johnson." The foregoing note is from Richardson's Correspondence; but there must be some mistake in the date of the letter itself. The 19*th* Feb. 1756, fell on a *Thursday*. As Johnson's handwriting is not easily read, perhaps the transcriber mistook *Thursday* for *Tuesday*.—ED.]

[1] [No work of Johnson's appears to have been published separately about this time, except Williams's Account of the Longitude.—ED.]

[2] [Upon this Mr. Murphy regrets, "for the honour of an admired writer, not to find a more liberal entry—to his friend in distress he sent eight shillings more than was wanted! Had an incident of this kind occurred in one of his romances, Richardson would have known how to grace his hero; but in fictitious scenes generosity costs the writer nothing."—*Life*, p. 87. This is very unjust. We have seen that Mr. Richardson had, just the month before, been called upon to do Johnson a similar service; and it has been stated that about this period Richardson was his constant resource in difficulties of this kind. Richardson moreover had numerous calls of the same nature from other quarters, which he answered with a ready and well-regulated charity. Instead, therefore, of censuring him for not giving more, Mr. Murphy might have praised him for having done all that was required on the particular occasion.—ED.]

[3] [His Essay on the writings and genius of Pope.—ED.]

[4] [His appointment of head-master of Winchester school.—ED.]

swerable for your conduct to posterity. I suppose you care not now to answer a letter, except there be a lucky concurrence of a postday with a holiday. These restraints are troublesome for a time, but custom makes them easy with the help of some honour, and a great deal of profit, and I doubt not but your abilities will obtain both.

"For my part, I have not lately done much. I have been ill in the winter, and my eye has been inflamed; but I please myself with the hopes of doing many things with which I have long pleased and deceived myself.

"What becomes of poor dear Collins[1]? I wrote him a letter which he never answered. I suppose writing is very troublesome to him. That man is no common loss. The moralists all talk of the uncertainty of fortune, and the transitoriness of beauty; but it is yet more dreadful to consider that the powers of the mind are equally liable to change, that understanding may make its appearance and depart, that it may blaze and expire.

"Let me not be long without a letter, and I will forgive you the omission of the visit; and if you can tell me that you are now more happy than before, you will give great pleasure to, dear sir, your most affectionate and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

His works this year were, an abstract or epitome, in octavo, of his folio Dictionary, and a few essays in a monthly publication, entitled "THE UNIVERSAL VISITER." Christopher Smart, with whose unhappy vacillation of mind he sincerely sympathised, was one of the stated undertakers of this miscellany; and it was to assist him that Johnson sometimes employed his pen. All the essays marked with two *asterisks* have been ascribed to him; but I am confident, from internal evidence, that of these, neither "The Life of Chaucer," "Reflections on the State of Portugal," nor an "Essay on Architecture," were written by him. I am equally confident, upon the same evidence, that he wrote "Further Thoughts on Agriculture†;" being the sequel of a very inferior essay on the same

[1] [Collins died in this year.—ED.]

subject, and which, though carried on as if by the same hand, is both in thinking and expression so far above it, and so strikingly peculiar, as to leave no doubt of its true parent; and that he also wrote "A Dissertation on the State of Literature and Authours†," and "A Dissertation on the Epitaphs written by Pope*." The last of these, indeed, he afterwards added to his "Idler." Why the essays truly written by him are marked in the same manner with some which he did not write, I cannot explain; but with deference to those who have ascribed to him the three essays which I have rejected, they want all the characteristical marks of Johnsonian composition.

He engaged also to superintend and contribute largely to another monthly publication, entitled "THE LITERARY MAGAZINE, OR UNIVERSAL REVIEW*[1];" the first number of which came out in May this year. What were his emoluments from this undertaking, and what other writers were employed in it, I have not discovered. He continued to write in it, with intermissions, till the fifteenth number; and I think that he never gave better proofs of the force, acuteness, and vivacity of his mind, than in this miscellany, whether we consider his original essays, or his reviews of the works of others. The "Preliminary Address†" to the publick is a proof how this great man could embellish, with the graces of superiour composition, even so trite a thing as the plan of a magazine.

His original essays are, "An Introduction to the Political State of Great Britain†;" "Remarks on the Militia Bill†;" "Observations on his Britannick Majesty's Treaties with the Empress of Russia and the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel†;" "Observations

[1] [Probably this was the execution of the design which he mentioned to Dr. Adams. See *ante*, p. 270.—ED.]

on the Present State of Affairs†;" and "Memoirs of Frederick III. King of Prussia†." In all these he displays extensive political knowledge and sagacity, expressed with uncommon energy and perspicuity, without any of those words which he sometimes took a pleasure in adopting, in imitation of Sir Thomas Browne; of whose "Christian Morals" he this year gave an edition, with his "Life*" prefixed to it, which is one of Johnson's best biographical performances. In one instance only in these essays has he indulged his *Brownism*. Dr. Robertson, the historian, mentioned it to me, as having at once convinced him that Johnson was the authour of the "Memoirs of the King of Prussia." Speaking of the pride which the old king, the father of his hero, took in being master of the tallest regiment in Europe, he says, "To review this *towering* regiment was his daily pleasure; and to perpetuate it was so much his care, that when he met a tall woman he immediately commanded one of his *Titanian* retinue to marry her, that they might *propagate procerity*." For this Anglo-Latian word *procerity*, Johnson had, however, the authority of Addison.

His reviews are of the following books: "Birch's History of the Royal Society†;" "Murphy's Gray's-Inn Journal†;" "Warton's Essay on the Writings and Genius of Pope, vol. I.†;" "Hampton's Translation of Polybius†;" "Blackwell's Memoirs of the Court of Augustus†;" "Russel's Natural History of Aleppo†;" "Sir Isaac Newton's Arguments in Proof of a Deity†;" "Borlase's History of the Isles of Scilly†; "Holme's Experiments on Bleaching†;" "Browne's Christian Morals†;" "Hales on distilling Sea-Water, Ventilators in Ships, and curing an ill Taste in Milk†;" "Lucas's Essay on Waters†;" "Keith's Catalogue of the Scottish Bishops†; "Browne's

History of Jamaica†;" "Philosophical Transactions, vol. XLIX.†;" "Mrs. Lenox's Translation of Sully's Memoirs*;" "Miscellanies by Elizabeth Harrison†;" "Evans's Map and Account of the Middle Colonies in America†;" "Letter on the Case of Admiral Byng*;" "Appeal to the People concerning Admiral Byng*;" "Hanway's Eight Days' Journey, and Essay on Tea*;" "The Cadet, a Military Treatise†;" "Some further Particulars in Relation to the Case of Admiral Byng, by a Gentleman of Oxford*;" "The Conduct of the Ministry relating to the present War impartially examined†;" "A Free Inquiry into the Nature and Origin of Evil*." All these, from internal evidence, were written by Johnson: some of them I know he avowed, and have marked them with an *asterisk* accordingly. Mr. Thomas Davies, indeed, ascribed to him the Review of Mr. Burke's "Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful;" and Sir John Hawkins, with equal discernment, has inserted it in his collection of Johnson's works: whereas it has no resemblance to Johnson's composition, and is well known to have been written by Mr. Murphy, who has acknowledged it to me and many others.

It is worthy of remark, in justice to Johnson's political character, which has been misrepresented[1] as abjectly submissive to power, that his "Observations on the present State of Affairs" glow with as animated a spirit of constitutional liberty as can be found any where. Thus he begins:

[1] [Dr. Johnson's political bias is nowhere, that the editor knows, represented as having been, *at this date*, "abjectly submissive to power." On the contrary, he was supposed, and with some justice, to be adverse to the reigning house and its successive ministers. The charge (which Mr. Boswell thus ingeniously answers by *shifting* it) was, that *after the grant of his pension* he became too "submissive to power;" but the truth is, that in spite of his party bias, Johnson was always a friend to discipline in the political, as in the social world; and although he joined in the clamour against Walpole, and hated George the Second, his general disposition was always to support the monarchical part of the constitution.—ED.]

"The time is now come, in which every Englishman expects to be informed of the national affairs; and in which he has a right to have that expectation gratified. For, whatever may be urged by ministers, or those whom vanity or interest make the followers of ministers, concerning the necessity of confidence in our governours, and the presumption of prying with profane eyes into the recesses of policy, it is evident that this reverence can be claimed only by counsels yet unexecuted, and projects suspended in deliberation. But when a design has ended in miscarriage or success, when every eye and every ear is witness to general discontent, or general satisfaction, it is then a proper time to disentangle confusion and illustrate obscurity; to show by what causes every event was produced, and in what effects it was likely to terminate; to lay down with distinct particularity what rumour always huddles in general exclamation, or perplexes by indigested narratives; to show whence happiness or calamity is derived, and whence it may be expected; and honestly to lay before the people what inquiry can gather of the past, and conjecture can estimate of the future."

Here we have it assumed as an incontrovertible principle, that in this country the people are the superintendents of the conduct and measures of those by whom government is administered; of the beneficial effect of which the present reign afforded an illustrious example, when addresses from all parts of the kingdom controlled an audacious attempt to introduce a new power subversive of the crown[1].

A still stronger proof of his patriotick spirit appears in his review of an "Essay on Waters, by Dr. Lucas[2]," of whom, after describing him as a man well known to the world for his daring defiance to power, when he thought it exerted on the side of wrong, he thus speaks:

"The Irish ministers drove him from his native country by a proclamation, in which they charge him with crimes of which

[1] [Mr. Boswell means Mr. Fox's celebrated *India Bill*, as an adversary of which he distinguished himself as much as a man in a private station could do.—Ed.]

[2] [Dr. Lucas was an apothecary in Dublin, who brought himself into public notice and a high degree of popularity by his writings and speeches against the government. He was elected representative of the city of Dublin in 1761; and a marble statue to his honour is erected in the Royal Exchange of that city. He died in Nov. 1771.—Ed.]

they never intended to be called to the proof, and oppressed him by methods equally irresistible by guilt and innocence.

"Let the man thus driven into exile, for having been the friend of his country, be received in every other place as a confessor of liberty; and let the tools of power be taught in time, that they may rob, but cannot impoverish."

Some of his reviews in this magazine are very short accounts of the pieces noticed, and I mention them only that Dr. Johnson's opinion of the works may be known; but many of them are examples of elaborate criticism, in the most masterly style. In his review of the "Memoirs of the Court of Augustus," he has the resolution to think and speak from his own mind, regardless of the cant transmitted from age to age, in praise of the ancient Romans. Thus:

"I know not why any one but a schoolboy in his declamation should whine over the commonwealth of Rome, which grew great only by the misery of the rest of mankind. The Romans, like others, as soon as they grew rich, grew corrupt; and in their corruption sold the lives and freedoms of themselves, and of one another."

Again,

"A people, who while they were poor robbed mankind; and as soon as they became rich robbed one another."

In his review of the Miscellanies in prose and verse, published by Elizabeth Harrison, but written by many hands, he gives an eminent proof at once of his orthodoxy and candour.

"The authours of the essays in prose seem generally to have imitated, or tried to imitate, the copiousness and luxuriance of Mrs. Rowe. This, however, is not all their praise; they have laboured to add to her brightness of imagery, her purity of sentiments. The poets have had Dr. Watts before their eyes; a writer who, if he stood not in the first class of genius, compensated that defect by a ready application of his powers to the promotion of piety. The attempt to employ the ornaments of romance in the decoration of religion was, I think, first made by Mr. Boyle's *Martyrdom of Theodora*; but Boyle's philoso-

phical studies did not allow him time for the cultivation of style: and the completion of the great design was reserved for Mrs. Rowe. Dr. Watts was one of the first who taught the dissenters to write and speak like other men, by showing them that elegance might consist with piety. They would have both done honour to a better society, for they had that charity which might well make their failings forgotten, and with which the whole Christian world might wish for communion. They were pure from all the heresies of an age, to which every opinion is become a favourite that the universal church has hitherto detested!"

"This praise the general interest of mankind requires to be given to writers who please and do not corrupt, who instruct and do not weary. But to them all human eulogies are vain, whom I believe applauded by angels, and numbered with the just."

His defence of tea against Mr. Jonas Hanway's violent attack upon that elegant and popular beverage, shows how very well a man of genius can write upon the slightest subject, when he writes, as the Italians say, *con amore:* I suppose no person ever enjoyed with more relish the infusion of that fragrant leaf than Johnson. The quantities which he drank of it at all hours were so great, that his nerves must have been uncommonly strong, not to have been extremely relaxed by such an intemperate use of it[1]. He assured me that he never felt the least inconvenience from it; which is a proof that the fault of his constitution was rather a too great tension of fibres, than the contrary. Mr. Hanway wrote an angry answer to Johnson's review of his Essay on Tea, and Johnson, after a full and deliberate pause, made a reply to it; the only instance, I believe, in the whole course of his life, when he condescended to oppose any thing that was written against him. I suppose

[1] [Sir John Hawkins calls his addiction to it *unmanly*, and almost gives it the colour of a crime. The Rev. Mr. Parker, of Henley, is in possession of a teapot which belonged to Dr. Johnson, and which contains *above two quarts.* —Ed.]

when he thought of any of his little antagonists, he was ever justly aware of the high sentiment of Ajax in Ovid:

> "Iste tulit pretium jam nunc certaminis hujus,
> Qui, cùm victus erit, mecum certasse feretur."

But, indeed, the good Mr. Hanway laid himself so open to ridicule, that Johnson's animadversions upon his attack were chiefly to make sport.

The generosity with which he pleads the cause of Admiral Byng is highly to the honour of his heart and spirit. Though Voltaire affects to be witty upon the fate of that unfortunate officer, observing that he was shot "*pour encourager les autres*," the nation has long been satisfied that his life was sacrificed to the political fervour of the times[1]. In the vault belonging to the Torrington family, in the church of Southill, in Bedfordshire, there is the following epitaph upon his monument, which I have transcribed:

> "TO THE PERPETUAL DISGRACE
> OF PUBLIC JUSTICE,
> THE HONOURABLE JOHN BYNG, ESQ.
> ADMIRAL OF THE BLUE,
> FELL A MARTYR TO POLITICAL
> PERSECUTION,
> MARCH 14, IN THE YEAR 1757;
> WHEN BRAVERY AND LOYALTY
> WERE INSUFFICIENT SECURITIES
> FOR THE LIFE AND HONOUR OF
> A NAVAL OFFICER."

Johnson's most exquisite critical essay in the Literary Magazine, and indeed any where, is his review of Soame Jenyns's "Inquiry into the Origin of Evil."

[1] [Nothing can be more unfounded than the assertion that Byng fell a martyr to *political party*. It is impossible to read the trial without being convinced that he had misconducted himself; and the extraordinary proceedings in both houses of parliament subsequent to his trial prove at once the zeal of his friends to invalidate the finding of the Court-Martial, and the absence of all reason for doing so. By a strange coincidence of circumstances, it happened that there was a total change of ministry between his condemnation and his death; so that one party presided at his trial and another at his execution:—there can be no stronger proof that he was not a political martyr. See this subject treated at large in the *Quarterly Review*, for March, 1822, article *Lord Orford's Memoirs*.—ED.]

Jenyns was possessed of lively talents, and a style eminently pure and easy, and could very happily play with a light subject, either in prose or verse; but when he speculated on that most difficult and excruciating question, the Origin of Evil, he "ventured far beyond his depth," and, accordingly, was exposed by Johnson, both with acute argument and brilliant wit. I remember when the late Mr. Bicknell's humorous performance, entitled "The Musical Travels of Joel Collyer," in which a slight attempt is made to ridicule Johnson, was ascribed to Soame Jenyns, "Ha! (said Johnson) I thought I had given *him* enough of it."

His triumph over Jenyns is thus described by my friend Mr. Courtenay in his "Poetical Review of the literary and moral Character of Dr. Johnson;" a performance of such merit, that had I not been honoured with a very kind and partial notice in it, I should echo the sentiments of men of the first taste loudly in its praise:

"When specious sophists with presumption scan
The source of evil hidden still from man;
Revive Arabian tales, and vainly hope
To rival St. John, and his scholar Pope:
Though metaphysicks spread the gloom of night,
By reason's star he guides our aching sight;
The bounds of knowledge marks, and points the way
To pathless wastes, where wilder'd sages stray;
Where, like a farthing link-boy, Jenyns stands,
And the dim torch drops from his feeble hands[1]."

[1] Some time after Dr. Johnson's death, there appeared in the newspapers and magazines [the following] illiberal and petulant attack upon him, in the form of an Epitaph, under the name of Mr. Soame Jenyns, very unworthy of that gentleman, who had quietly submitted to the critical lash while Johnson lived. It assumed, as characteristicks of him, all the vulgar circumstances of abuse which had circulated amongst the ignorant.

[EPITAPH.

By Soame Jenyns, Esq.

"Here lies poor JOHNSON. Reader, have a care,
Tread lightly, lest you rouse a sleeping bear;
Religious, moral, generous, and humane
He was—but self-sufficient, rude, and vain:
Ill-bred and over-bearing in dispute,
A scholar and a Christian—yet a brute.

Tyers' Biogr. Sketch, p. 11.

[It was about this time that Mr. Tyers, by the introduction of Christopher Smart, formed that acquaintance with Johnson which lasted to the doctor's death, with, it is believed, unabated cordiality.

Johnson, whose hearing was not always good, understood Smart called him by the name of Thyer, that eminent scholar, librarian of Manchester, and a nonjuror. This mistake was rather beneficial than otherwise to Mr. Tyers. Johnson had been much indisposed all that day, and repeated a psalm he had just translated, during his affliction, into Latin verse, and did not commit to paper. For so retentive was his memory, that he could always recover whatever he lent to that faculty. Smart in return recited some of his own Latin compositions. He had translated with success, and to Mr. Pope's *satisfaction*, his St. Cecilian Ode.

Come when you would, early or late (for Johnson

> Would you know all his wisdom and his folly,
> His actions, sayings, mirth and melancholy,
> *Boswell* and *Thrale*, retailers of his wit,
> Will tell you how he wrote, and talk'd, and cough'd, and spit."
> *Gent. Mag.* 1786, p. 428.]

This was an unbecoming indulgence of puny resentment, at a time when he himself was at a very advanced age, and had a near prospect of descending to the grave. I was truly sorry for it; for he was then become an avowed and (as my Lord Bishop of London, who had a serious conversation with him on the subject, assures me) a sincere Christian. He could not expect that Johnson's numerous friends would patiently bear to have the memory of their master stigmatized by no mean pen, but that, at least, one would be found to retort. Accordingly, this unjust and sarcastick Epitaph was met in the same publick field by an answer, in terms by no means soft, and such as wanton provocation only could justify:

EPITAPH,

Prepared for a creature not quite dead *yet*.

" Here lies a little ugly nauseous elf,
Who judging only from his wretched self,
Feebly attempted, petulant and vain,
The 'Origin of Evil' to explain.
A mighty Genius at this elf displeas'd,
With a strong critick grasp the urchin squeez'd.
For thirty years its coward spleen it kept,
Till in the dust the mighty Genius slept:
Then stunk and fretted in expiring snuff,
And blink'd at JOHNSON with its last poor puff."

[The answer was no doubt by Mr. Boswell himself, and does more credit to his zeal than his poetical talents.—ED.]

desired to be called from bed when a visitor was at the door), the tea-table was sure to be spread, TE *veniente die*, TE *decedente*.—With TEA he cheered the morning; with TEA he solaced the evening. This pun upon his favourite liquor he heard with a smile. Though his time seemed to be bespoke, and quite engrossed, his house was always open to all his acquaintance, new and old. His amanuensis has given up his pen, the printer's devil has waited on the stairs for a proof sheet, and the press has often stood still, while his visitors were delighted and instructed. No subject ever came amiss to him. He could transfer his thoughts from one thing to another with the most accommodating facility. He had the art, for which Locke was famous, of leading people to talk on their favourite subjects, and on what they knew best. By this he acquired a great deal of information. What he once heard he rarely forgot. They gave him their best conversation, and he generally made them pleased with themselves, for endeavouring to please him. Poet Smart used to relate, "that his first conversation with Johnson was of such variety and length, that it began with poetry and ended at fluxions." He always talked as if he was talking upon oath. He was the wisest person, and had the most knowledge in ready cash, that Tyers ever knew. Johnson's advice was consulted on all occasions. He was known to be a good casuist, and therefore had many cases submitted for his judgment. His conversation, in the judgment of several, was thought to be equal to his correct writings. Perhaps the tongue will throw out more animated expressions than the pen. He said the most common things in the newest manner. He always commanded attention and regard. His person, though unadorned with dress, and even deformed by neglect, made you expect something, and you was hardly ever

disappointed. His manner was interesting: the tone of his voice, and the sincerity of his expressions, even when they did not captivate your affections, or carry conviction, prevented contempt. If the line, by Pope, on his father, can be applied to Johnson, it is characteristick of him, who never swore, nor told a lie. If the first part is not confined to the oath of allegiance[1], it will be useful to insert it.

"Nor dared an oath, nor hazarded a lie."

It must be owned, his countenance, on some occasions, resembled too much the medallic likeness of Magliabechi[2], as exhibited before the printed account of him by Mr. Spence. No man dared to take liberties with him, nor flatly contradict him; for he could repel any attack, having always about him the weapons of ridicule, of wit, and of argument. It must be owned, that some who had the desire to be admitted to him thought him too dogmatical, and as exacting too much homage to his opinions, and came no more. For they said, while he presided in his library, surrounded by his admirers, he would, "like Cato, give his little senate laws." He had great knowledge in the science of human nature, and of the fashions and customs of life, and knew the world well. He had often in his mouth this line of Pope,

"The proper study of mankind is man."

He was desirous of surveying life in all its modes and forms, and in all climates. He once offered to attend his friend Vansittart[3] to India, who was invited there

[1] [Mr. Tyers seems to mean that the *oath of allegiance* is the only justifiable oath; and in allusion, perhaps, to Johnson's political principles, he insinuates, that even *that* oath he would not have willingly taken.—Ed.]

[2] [Librarian to the Grand Dukes of Florence, and celebrated for vast erudition and extreme slovenliness. He died in 1714, aged 80.—Ed.]

[3] [This proposition of an adventure to India is nowhere else, that the Editor has seen, alluded to. Dr. Vansittart, of Oxford, was a great friend of Johnson's, and it is possible that he may have been invited by his younger brother,

to make a fortune; but it did not take place. He talked much of travelling into Poland, to observe the life of the Palatines, the account of which struck his curiosity very much.

His benevolence to mankind was known to all who knew him. Though so declared a friend to the church of England and even a friend to the convocation, it assuredly was not in his wish to persecute for speculative notions. He used to say, he had no quarrel with any order of men, unless they disbelieved in revelation and a future state. He would indeed have sided with Sacheverell against Daniel Burgess, if he thought the church was in danger. His hand and his heart were always open to charity. The objects under his own roof were only a few of the subjects for relief. He was ever at the head of subscription in cases of distress. His guinea, as he said of another man of a bountiful disposition, was always ready. He wrote an exhortation to publick bounty. He drew up a paper to recommend the French prisoners, in the last war but one, to the English benevolence; which was of service. He implored the hand of benevolence for others, even when he almost seemed a proper object of it himself.

It may be inserted here, that Johnson, soon after his coming to London, had thought of writing a history of the revival of learning. The booksellers had other service to offer him. But he never undertook it. The proprietors of the Universal History wished him to take any part in that voluminous work. But he declined their offer[1].]

This gentleman, whom he familiarly called Tom

Mr. Henry Vansittart, when Governor of Bengal, to join him in India, and Dr. Vansittart might perhaps have had some idea of including Johnson in the arrangement. It seems doubtful whether Johnson was personally acquainted with Mr. Henry Vansittart.—ED.]

[1] [Although much of the foregoing extract is founded on Mr. Tyers's later

Tyers, was the son of Mr. Jonathan Tyers, the founder of that excellent place of publick amusement, Vauxhall Gardens, which must ever be an estate to its proprietor, as it is peculiarly adapted to the taste of the English nation; there being a mixture of curious show, gay exhibition, musick, vocal and instrumental, not too refined for the general ear,—for all which only a shilling is paid[1]; and, though last, not least, good eating and drinking for those who choose to purchase that regale. Mr. Thomas Tyers was bred to the law; but having a handsome fortune, vivacity of temper, and eccentricity of mind, he could not confine himself to the regularity of practice. He therefore ran about the world with a pleasant carelessness, amusing every body by his desultory conversation. He abounded in anecdote, but was not sufficiently attentive to accuracy[2]. I therefore cannot venture to avail myself much of a biographical sketch of Johnson which he published, being one among the various persons ambitious of appending their names to that of my

observations, yet, as it refers more particularly to the impression made at the commencement of their acquaintance, when there is little said by Mr. Boswell of Dr. Johnson's personal history, it is thought right to insert the whole in this place. Here, too, is added Mr. Boswell's account of Mr. Tyers, which, in the former editions, is found sub anno 1778.—ED.]

[1] In summer, 1792, additional and more expensive decorations having been introduced, the price of admission was raised to two shillings. I cannot approve of this. The company may be more select; but a number of the honest commonalty are, I fear, excluded from sharing in elegant and innocent entertainment. An attempt to abolish the one-shilling gallery at the playhouse has been very properly counteracted.—BOSWELL. [The admission has been since raised to four shillings, without improving, it is said, either the class of company, or the profits of the proprietors.—ED.]

[2] [Mr. Boswell, who was justly proud of the happy diligence with which he made daily notes of Dr. Johnson's conversation, is too apt to blame every other reporter of anecdotes for "*inaccuracy.*" We have seen, and shall have future occasions to observe, that his own written records are sometimes liable to the same imputation, and of course still more so must be the relations of those who not only made no notes, but who, at the time, never contemplated writing. Mr. Tyers very modestly calls his pamphlet a *sketch*, and he certainly writes, as Mr. Boswell says, in a careless and desultory style; but there seems, on examination, no reason to doubt the accuracy of his *facts*; indeed, all the other biographers (not excepting Mr. Boswell himself) have either borrowed from Tyers, or have told the same stories in the same way as he has done, and thus vouched for his general accuracy.—ED.]

illustrious friend. That sketch is, however, an entertaining little collection of fragments. Those which he published of Pope and Addison are of higher merit; but his fame must chiefly rest upon his "Political Conferences," in which he introduces several eminent persons delivering their sentiments in the way of dialogue, and discovers a considerable share of learning, various knowledge, and discernment of character. This much may I be allowed to say of a man who was exceedingly obliging to me, and who lived with Dr. Johnson in as easy a manner as almost any of his very numerous acquaintance.

This year Mr. William Payne, brother of the respectable bookseller of that name, published "An Introduction to the Game of Draughts," to which Johnson contributed a Dedication to the Earl of Rochford *, and a Preface *, both of which are admirably adapted to the treatise to which they are prefixed. Johnson, I believe, did not play at draughts after leaving college, by which he suffered; for it would have afforded him an innocent soothing relief from the melancholy which distressed him so often. I have heard him regret that he had not learn to play at cards; and the game at draughts we know is peculiarly calculated to fix the attention without straining it. There is a composure and gravity in draughts which insensibly tranquillizes the mind; and, accordingly, the Dutch are fond of it, as they are of smoking, of the sedative influence of which, though he himself never smoked, he had a high opinion [1]. [Sir J. Hawkins heard him say that insanity had grown more frequent since smoking had gone out of fashion.] Besides, there is in draughts some exercise of the faculties; and, accordingly, Johnson wishing to dignify the subject in his Dedi-

Hawk. p. 312.

[1] See *post*, 19th Aug. 1773.

cation with what is most estimable in it, observes, "Triflers may find or make any thing a trifle: but since it is the great characteristick of a wise man to see events in their causes, to obviate consequences, and ascertain contingencies, your lordship will think nothing a trifle by which the mind is inured to caution, foresight, and circumspection."

As one of the little occasional advantages which he did not disdain to take by his pen, as a man whose profession was literature, he this year accepted of a guinea from Mr. Robert Dodsley, for writing the introduction to "The London Chronicle," an evening newspaper; and even in so slight a performance exhibited peculiar talents. This Chronicle still subsists, and from what I observed, when I was abroad, has a more extensive circulation upon the continent than any of the English newspapers. It was constantly read by Johnson himself; and it is but just to observe, that it has all along been distinguished for good sense, accuracy, moderation, and delicacy.

Another instance of the same nature has been communicated[1] to me by the Rev. Dr. Thomas Campbell[2], who has done himself considerable credit by his own writings. "Sitting with Dr. Johnson one morning alone, he asked me if I had known Dr. Madden, who was authour of the premium-scheme[3] in Ireland. On

[1] [Hawkins had told the same story on Johnson's written authority, but Boswell is always reluctant to have any obligations to Hawkins.—ED.]

[2] [See *post*, 6th April, 1775.—ED.]

[3] In the college of Dublin, four quarterly examinations of the students are held in each year, in various prescribed branches of literature and science; and premiums, consisting of books impressed with the college arms, are judged by examiners (composed generally of the junior fellows), to those who have most distinguished themselves in the several classes, after a very rigid trial, which lasts two days: this regulation, which has subsisted about seventy years, has been attended with the most beneficial effects. Dr. Samuel Madden was the first proposer in that university. They were instituted about the year 1734. He was also one of the founders of the Dublin Society for the encouragement of arts and agriculture. In addition to the premiums which were and are still annually given by that society for this purpose, Dr. Madden gave others from his own fund. Hence he was usually called "Premium Madden."—MALONE.

my answering in the affirmative, and also that I had for some years lived in his neighbourhood, &c. he begged of me that when I returned to Ireland, I would endeavour to procure for him a poem of Dr. Madden's, called 'Boulter's Monument[1].' 'The reason (said he) why I wish for it is this: when Dr. Madden came to London, he submitted that work to my castigation; and I remember I blotted a great many lines, and might have blotted many more, without making the poem worse[2]. However, the doctor was very thankful, and very generous, for he gave me ten guineas, *which was to me at that time a great sum.*'" [Such casual emoluments as these Johnson frequently derived from his profession of an authour. For the dedication to his present majesty, of Adams's book on the use of the globes, he was, as himself informed me, gratified with a present of a very curious meteorological instrument, of a new and ingenious construction. Hawk. p. 391, 392.

About this time, as it is supposed, he composed pulpit discourses for sundry clergymen, and for these, he made no scruple of confessing, he was paid: his price, I am informed, was a moderate one, a guinea; and such was his notion of justice, that having been paid, he considered them so absolutely the property of the purchaser, as to renounce all claim to them. He reckoned that he had written about forty sermons; but, except as to some, knew not in what hands they were—"I have," said he, "been paid for them, and have no right to inquire about them[3]."]

[1] Dr. Hugh Boulter, archbishop of Armagh, and primate of Ireland. He died in Sept. 27, 1742, at which time he was, for the thirteenth time, one of the lords justices of that kingdom. Johnson speaks of him in high terms of commendation, in his Life of Ambrose Philips.—BOSWELL.

[2] Dr. Madden wrote very bad verses. Vide those prefixed to Leland's Life of Philip of Macedon, 4to. 1758.—KEARNEY. [It is needless to look further than the work in question. Boulter's Monument is, in spite of Johnson's mending hand, exceedingly insipid.—ED.]

[3] [This practice is of very doubtful propriety. In the case of an *elective*

Hawk. p. 360, 361.

[About the year 1756, time had produced a change in the situation of many of Johnson's friends, who were used to meet him in Ivy-lane. Death had taken from them M'Ghie; Barker went to settle as a practising physician at Trowbridge; Dyer went abroad; Hawkesworth was busied in forming new connexions; and Sir J. Hawkins had lately made one that removed from him all temptations to pass his evenings from home. The consequence was, that the club at the King's-head broke up, and he who had first formed it into a society was left with fewer around him than were able to support it.

All this while, the booksellers, who, by his own confession, were his best friends, had their eyes upon Johnson, and reflected with some concern on what seemed to them a misapplication of his talents. The furnishing magazines, reviews, and even newspapers, with literary intelligence, and the authours of books, who could not write them for themselves, with dedications and prefaces, they looked on as employments beneath him, who had attained to such eminence as a writer; they, therefore, in the year 1756, found out for him such a one as seemed to afford a prospect both of amusement and profit: this was an edition of Shakspeare's dramatic works, which, by a concurrence of circumstances, was now become necessary, to answer the increasing demand of the publick for the writings of that authour.

In consequence of this application], he this year resumed his scheme of giving an edition of Shakspeare with notes. He issued Proposals of considerable length [1], in which he showed that he perfectly well

chapel, it might, as the Bishop of Ferns observes to me, amount to an absolute fraud, as a person might be chosen for the merits of a sermon not written by himself. See *ante*, p. 240, *note*.—Ed.]

[1] They have been reprinted by Mr. Malone in the preface to his edition of Shakspeare.—Boswell.

knew what a variety of research such an undertaking required; but his indolence prevented him from pursuing it with that diligence which alone can collect those scattered facts, that genius, however acute, penetrating, and luminous, cannot discover by its own force. It is remarkable, that at this time his fancied activity was for the moment so vigorous, that he promised his work should be published before Christmas, 1757. Yet nine years elapsed before it saw the light. His throes in bringing it forth had been severe and remittent; and at last we may almost conclude that the Cæsarean operation was performed by the knife of Churchill, whose upbraiding satire, I dare say, made Johnson's friends urge him to despatch. Hawk. p. 360, 361.

"He for subscribers baits his hook,
And takes your cash; but where's the book?
No matter where; wise fear, you know,
Forbids the robbing of a foe;
But what, to serve our private ends,
Forbids the cheating of our friends?"

[A stranger to Johnson's character and temper would have thought, that the study of an authour, whose skill in the science of human life was so deep, and whose perfections were so many and various as to be above the reach of all praise, must have been the most pleasing employment that his imagination could suggest, but it was not so: in a visit that he one morning made to Sir J. Hawkins, the latter congratulated him on his being now engaged in a work that suited his genius, and that, requiring none of that severe application which his Dictionary had condemned him to, would, no doubt, be executed *con amore*.—His answer was, "I look upon this as I did upon the Dictionary: it is all *work*, and my inducement to it is not love or desire of fame, but the want of money, which is the only motive to writing that I Hawk. p. 362.

Hawk. p. 362. know of."—And the event was, Sir J. Hawkins adds, evidence to him, that in this speech he declared his genuine sentiments; for neither did he set himself to collect early editions of his authour, old plays, translations of histories, and of the classics, and other materials necessary for his purpose, nor could he be prevailed on to enter into that course of reading, without which it seemed impossible to come at the sense of his authour. It was provoking to all his friends to see him waste his days, his weeks, and his months so long, that they feared a mental lethargy had seized him, out of which he would never recover. In this, however, they were happily deceived, for, after two years' inactivity, they find him roused to action, and engaged—not in the prosecution of the work, for the completion whereof he stood doubly bound, but—in a new one, the furnishing a series of periodical essays, entitled, and it may be thought not improperly, "The Idler," as his motive to the employment was aversion to a labour he had undertaken, though in the execution, it must be owned, it merited a better name.]

About this period he was offered a living of considerable value in Lincolnshire, if he were inclined to enter into holy orders. It was a rectory in the gift of Mr. Langton, the father of his much-valued friend. But he did not accept of it; partly I believe from a conscientious motive, being persuaded that his temper and habits rendered him unfit for that assiduous and familiar instruction of the vulgar and ignorant, which he held to be an essential duty in a clergyman; and partly because his love of a London life was so strong, that he would have thought himself an exile in any other place, particularly if residing in the country. Whoever would wish to see his thoughts upon that subject displayed in their full force, may peruse the Adventurer, Number 126.

In 1757 it does not appear that he published any thing, except some of those articles in the Literary Magazine, which have been mentioned. That magazine, after Johnson ceased to write in it, gradually declined, though the popular epithet of *Antigallican* was added to it; and in July, 1758, it expired. He probably prepared a part of his Shakspeare this year, and he dictated a speech on the subject of an address to the throne, after the expedition to Rochefort, which was delivered by one of his friends, I know not in what publick meeting. It is printed in the Gentleman's Magazine for October, 1785 (p. 764), as his, and bears sufficient marks of authenticity.

By the favour of Mr. Joseph Cooper Walker, of the treasury, Dublin, I have obtained a copy of the following letter from Johnson to the venerable authour of "Dissertations on the History of Ireland."

"TO CHARLES O'CONNOR, ESQ.[1]

"London, 9 April, 1757.

"SIR,—I have lately, by the favour of Mr. Faulkner, seen your account of Ireland, and cannot forbear to solicit a prosecution of your design. Sir William Temple complains that Ireland is less known than any other country, as to its ancient state. The natives have had little leisure, and little encouragement for inquiry; and strangers, not knowing the language, have had no ability.

"I have long wished that the Irish literature were cultivated[2].

[1] Of this gentleman, who died at his seat at Ballinegare, in the county of Roscommon, in Ireland, July 1, 1791, in his eighty-second year, some account may be found in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of that date. Of the work here alluded to by Dr. Johnson—"Dissertations on the History of Ireland"—a second and much improved edition was published by the authour in 1766.—MALONE.

[2] The celebrated oratour, Mr. Flood, has shown himself to be of Dr. Johnson's opinion; having by his will bequeathed his estate, after the death of his wife Lady Frances, to the University of Dublin; desiring that immediately after the said estate shall come into their possession, they shall appoint two professors, one for the study of the native Erse or Irish language, and the other for the study of Irish antiquities and Irish history, and for the study of any other European language illustrative of, or auxiliary to, the study of Irish antiquities or Irish history: and that they shall give yearly two liberal premiums for two

Ireland is known by tradition to have been once the seat of piety and learning; and surely it would be very acceptable to all those who are curious either in the original of nations, or the affinities of languages, to be further informed of the revolution of a people so ancient, and once so illustrious.

"What relation there is between the Welsh and Irish language, or between the language of Ireland and that of Biscay, deserves inquiry. Of these provincial and unextended tongues, it seldom happens that more than one are understood by any one man; and, therefore, it seldom happens that a fair comparison can be made. I hope you will continue to cultivate this kind of learning, which has too long lain neglected, and which, if it be suffered to remain in oblivion for another century, may, perhaps, never be retrieved. As I wish well to all useful undertakings, I would not forbear to let you know how much you deserve, in my opinion, from all lovers of study, and how much pleasure your work has given to, sir, your most obliged and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO THE REVEREND MR. THOMAS WARTON.

"(London), 21 June, 1757.

"DEAR SIR,—Dr. Marsili, of Padua, a learned gentleman, and good Latin poet, has a mind to see Oxford. I have given him a letter to Dr. Huddersford[1], and shall be glad if you will introduce him, and show him any thing in Oxford.

"I am printing my new edition of Shakspeare.

"I long to see you all, but cannot conveniently come yet. You might write to me now and then, if you were good for any thing. But[2] *honores mutant mores*. Professors forget their friends. I shall certainly complain to Miss Jones[3]. I am, your, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON.

"Please to make my compliments to Mr. Wise."

compositions, one in verse, and the other in prose, in the Irish language.—BOSWELL.

Since the above was written, Mr. Flood's will has been set aside, after a trial at bar, in the court of exchequer in Ireland.—MALONE.

[1] Now, or late, vice-chancellor.—WARTON.

[2] Mr. Warton was elected Professor of Poetry at Oxford in the preceding year.—WARTON.

[3] Miss Jones lived at Oxford, and was often of our parties. She was a very ingenious poetess, and published a volume of poems; and, on the whole, was a most sensible, agreeable, and amiable woman. She was sister to the Reverend River Jones, chanter of Christ-church cathedral at Oxford, and Johnson used to call her the *chantress*. I have heard him often address her in this passage from "Il Penseroso:"

"Thee, chantress, oft the woods among
I woo, &c."

She died unmarried.—WARTON.

"TO BENNET LANGTON, ESQ. OF TRIN. COLL. OXFORD[1].

"28 June, 1758.

"DEAR SIR,—Though I might have expected to hear from you, upon your entrance into a new state of life at a new place, yet recollecting (not without some degree of shame) that I owe you a letter upon an old account, I think it my part to write first. This, indeed, I do not only from complaisance but from interest; for living on in the old way, I am very glad of a correspondent so capable as yourself, to diversify the hours. You have, at present, too many novelties about you to need any help from me to drive along your time.

"I know not any thing more pleasant, or more instructive, than to compare experience with expectation, or to register from time to time the difference between idea and reality. It is by this kind of observation that we grow daily less liable to be disappointed. You, who are very capable of anticipating futurity, and raising phantoms before your own eyes, must often have imagined to yourself an academical life, and have conceived what would be the manners, the views, and the conversation, of men devoted to letters; how they would choose their companions, how they would direct their studies, and how they would regulate their lives. Let me know what you expected, and what you have found. At least record it to yourself before custom has reconciled you to the scenes before you, and the disparity of your discoveries to your hopes has vanished from your mind. It is a rule never to be forgotten, that whatever strikes strongly should be described while the first impression remains fresh upon the mind.

"I love, dear sir, to think on you, and therefore should willingly write more to you, but that the post will not now give me leave to do more than send my compliments to Mr. Warton, and tell you that I am, dear sir, most affectionately, your very humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

Mr. Burney having enclosed to him an extract from the review of his Dictionary in the *Bibliotheque des Savans*[2], and a list of subscribers to his Shakspeare, which Mr. Burney had procured in Norfolk, he wrote the following answer:

[1] [This letter is dated June, 1758, and so placed by Mr. Boswell; but it is evident that this must be a mistake; for it is written on Mr. Langton's first entrance into college life; and we shall see in the letter, dated June 1, 1758 (p. 322), that Langton had been already some time the pupil of Mr. Warton. The true date, therefore, of this letter was probably June, 1757.—ED.]

[2] Tom. III. p. 482.

"TO MR. BURNEY, IN LYNNE, NORFOLK.

"Gough-square, 24 Dec. 1757.

"SIR,—That I may show myself sensible of your favours, and not commit the same fault a second time, I make haste to answer the letter which I received this morning. The truth is, the other likewise was received, and I wrote an answer; but being desirous to transmit you some proposals and receipts, I waited till I could find a convenient conveyance, and day was passed after day, till other things drove it from my thoughts; yet not so, but that I remember with great pleasure your commendation of my Dictionary. Your praise was welcome, not only because I believe it was sincere, but because praise has been very scarce. A man of your candour will be surprised when I tell you that among all my acquaintance there were only two, who, upon the publication of my book, did not endeavour to depress me with threats of censure from the publick, or with objections learned from those who had learned them from my own preface. Yours is the only letter of good-will that I have received; though, indeed, I am promised something of that sort from Sweden.

"How my new edition of Shakspeare will be received I know not; the subscription has not been very successful. I shall publish about March.

"If you can direct me how to send proposals, I should wish that they were in such hands.

"I remember, sir, in some of the first letters with which you favoured me, you mentioned your lady. May I inquire after her? In return for the favours which you have shown me, it is not much to tell you, that I wish you and her all that can conduce to your happiness. I am, sir, your most obliged and most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

In 1758, we find him, it should seem, in as easy and pleasant a state of existence, as constitutional unhappiness ever permitted him to enjoy[1].

"TO MR. BURNEY, AT LYNNE, NORFOLK.

"London, 8 March, 1758.

"SIR,—Your kindness is so great, and my claim to any particular regard from you so little, that I am at a loss how to ex-

[1] [Here, in his later editions, Mr. Boswell had erroneously inserted a letter to Mr. Langton, which will be found in its real place at the beginning of the next year.—ED.]

press my sense of your favours[1]; but I am, indeed, much pleased to be thus distinguished by you.

"I am ashamed to tell you that my Shakspeare will not be out so soon as I promised my subscribers; but I did not promise them more than I promised myself. It will, however, be published before summer.

"I have sent you a bundle of proposals, which, I think, do not profess more than I have hitherto performed. I have printed many of the plays, and have hitherto left very few passages unexplained: where I am quite at loss, I confess my ignorance, which is seldom done by commentators.

"I have likewise enclosed twelve receipts; not that I mean to impose upon you the trouble of pushing them with more importunity than may seem proper, but that you may rather have more than fewer than you will want. The proposals you will desseminate as there shall be an opportunity. I once printed them at length in the Chronicle, and some of my friends (I believe Mr. Murphy, who formerly wrote the Gray's-Inn Journal) introduced them with a splendid encomium.

"Since the Life of Browne, I have been a little engaged, from time to time, in the Literary Magazine, but not very lately. I have not the collection by me, and therefore cannot draw out a catalogue of my own parts, but will do it, and send it. Do not buy them, for I will gather all those that have any thing of mine in them, and send them to Mrs. Burney, as a small token of gratitude for the regard which she is pleased to bestow upon me. I am, sir, your most obliged and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Dr. Burney has kindly favoured me with the following memorandum, which I take the liberty to insert in his own genuine easy style. I love to exhibit sketches of my illustrious friend by various eminent hands.

"Soon after this, Mr. Burney, during a visit to the capital, had an interview with him in Gough-square[2],

[1] This letter was an answer to one, in which was enclosed a draft for the payment of some subscriptions to his Shakspeare.—BOSWELL.

[2] [If the error in the date of the letter to Mr. Langton, of January, 1759, had not been discovered, we might have doubted the accuracy of Dr. Burney as to his having been entertained by Johnson, in Gough-square, so late in the spring of 1758: but it is now plain that it was not till the spring of 1759 that he broke up his establishment there.—ED.]

where he dined and drank tea with him, and was introduced to the acquaintance of Mrs. Williams. After dinner, Mr. Johnson proposed to Mr. Burney to go up with him into his garret, which being accepted, he there found about five or six Greek folios, a deal writing-desk, and a chair and a half. Johnson giving to his guest the entire seat, tottered himself on one with only three legs and one arm. Here he gave Mr. Burney. Mrs. Williams's history, and showed him some volumes of his Shakspeare already printed, to prove that he was in earnest. Upon Mr. Burney's opening the first volume, at the Merchant of Venice, he observed to him, that he seemed to be more severe on Warburton than Theobald. 'O poor Tib.! (said Johnson) he was ready knocked down to my hands; Warburton stands between me and him.'—'But, sir (said Mr. Burney), you'll have Warburton upon your bones, won't you?'—'No, sir; he'll not come out: he'll only growl in his den.'—'But you think, sir, that Warburton is a superiour critick to Theobald?' —'O, sir, he'd make two-and-fifty Theobalds, cut into slices! The worst of Warburton is, that he has a rage for saying something, when there's nothing to be said.'—Mr. Burney then asked him whether he had seen the letter which Warburton had written in answer to a pamphlet addressed 'To the most impudent Man alive.' He answered in the negative. Mr. Burney told him it was supposed to be written by Mallet. The controversy now raged between the friends of Pope and Bolingbroke; and Warburton and Mallet were the leaders of the several parties. Mr. Burney asked him then if he had seen Warburton's book against Bolingbroke's Philosophy? 'No, sir; I have never read Bolingbroke's impiety, and therefore am not interested about its confutation[1].'"

[1] [See *ante*, p. 255.—ED.]

On the fifteenth of April he began a new periodical paper, entitled "THE IDLER*," which came out every Saturday in a weekly newspaper, called "The Universal Chronicle, or Weekly Gazette," published by Newbery[1]. These essays were continued till April 5, 1760. Of one hundred and three, their total number, twelve were contributed by his friends; of which, Numbers 33, 93, and 96, were written by Mr. Thomas Warton; No. 67, by Mr. Langton; and No. 76, 79, and 82, by Sir Joshua Reynolds; the concluding words of No. 82, "and pollute his canvas with deformity," being added by Johnson; as Sir Joshua informed me.

The IDLER is evidently the work of the same mind which produced the RAMBLER, but has less body and more spirit. It has more variety of real life, and greater facility of language. He describes the miseries of idleness, with the lively sensations of one who has felt them; and in his private memorandums while engaged in it, we find "This year I hope to learn diligence." Many of these excellent essays were written as hastily as an ordinary letter. Mr. Langton remembers Johnson, when on a visit at Oxford, asking him one evening how long it was till the post went out; and on being told about half an hour, he exclaimed, "then we shall do very well." He upon this instantly sat down and finished an Idler, which it was necessary should be in London the next day. Mr. Langton having signified a wish to read it, "Sir, (said he) you shall not do more than I have done myself." He then folded it up, and sent it off. Prayers & Med. p. 30.

Yet there are in the Idler several papers which

[1] This is a slight mistake. The first number of "The Idler" appeared on the 15th of April, 1758, in No. 2 of the *Universal Chronicle*, &c., which was published by J. Payne, for whom also the Rambler had been printed. On the 29th of April this newspaper assumed the title of *Payne's Universal Chronicle*, &c.—MALONE.

show as much profundity of thought, and labour of language, as any of this great man's writings. No. 14, "Robbery of Time;" No. 24, "Thinking;" No. 41, "Death of a Friend;" No. 43, "Flight of Time;" No. 51, "Domestick greatness unattainable;" No. 52, "Self-denial;" No. 58, "Actual, how short of fancied, excellence;" No. 89, "Physical evil moral good;" and his concluding paper on "The horrour of the last," will prove this assertion. I know not why a motto, the usual trapping of periodical papers, is prefixed to very few of the Idlers, as I have heard Johnson commend the custom; and he never could be at a loss for one, his memory being stored with innumerable passages of the classicks. In this series of essays he exhibits admirable instances of grave humour, of which he had an uncommon share. Nor on some occasions has he repressed that power of sophistry which he possessed in so eminent a degree. In No. 11, he treats with the utmost contempt the opinion that our mental faculties depend, in some degree, upon the weather; an opinion, which they who have never experienced its truth are not to be envied, and of which he himself could not but be sensible, as the effects of weather upon him were very visible. Yet thus he declaims: "Surely nothing is more reproachful to a being endowed with reason, than to resign its powers to the influence of the air, and live in dependence on the weather and the wind for the only blessings which nature has put into our power, tranquillity and benevolence.—This distinction of seasons is produced only by imagination operating on luxury. To temperance, every day is bright; and every hour is propitious to diligence. He that shall resolutely excite his faculties, or exert his virtues, will soon make himself superiour to the seasons; and may set at defiance the morning mist and the even-

ing damp, the blasts of the east, and the clouds of the south."

Alas! it is too certain, that where the frame has delicate fibres, and there is a fine sensibility, such influences of the air are irresistible. He might as well have bid defiance to the ague, the palsy, and all other bodily disorders. Such boasting of the mind is false elevation:

"I think the Romans call it Stoicism."

But in this number of his Idler his spirits seem to run riot[1]; for in the wantonness of his disquisition he forgets, for a moment, even the reverence for that which he held in high respect; and describes "the attendant on a *court*[2]," as one "whose business is to watch the looks of a being, weak and foolish as himself."

His unqualified ridicule of rhetorical gesture or action is not, surely, a test of truth; yet we cannot help admiring how well it is adapted to produce the effect which he wished. "Neither the judges of our laws, nor the representatives of our people, would be much affected by laboured gesticulations, or believe any man the more because he rolled his eyes, or puffed his cheeks, or spread abroad his arms, or stamped the ground, or thumped his breast; or turned his eyes sometimes to the ceiling, and sometimes to the floor."

A casual coincidence with other writers, or an adoption of a sentiment or image which has been found in the writings of another, and afterwards appears in the mind as one's own, is not unfrequent.

[1] [This doctrine of the little influence of the weather, however, seems to have been his fixed opinion: he often repeated it in conversation. See *post*, 9th July, 1763.—Ed.]

[2] [See *ante*, p. 294. Mr. Boswell seems resolved to forget that Johnson's reverence for the *court* had not yet commenced. George II. was still alive, whom Johnson always abused, and sometimes very indecently. See *ante*, p. 118, and *post*, 6th April, 1775.—Ed.]

The richness of Johnson's fancy, which could supply his page abundantly on all occasions, and the strength of his memory, which at once detected the real owner of any thought, made him less liable to the imputation of plagiarism than, perhaps, any of our writers. In the Idler, however, there is a paper, in which conversation is assimilated to a bowl of punch, where there is the same train of comparison as in a poem by Blacklock, in his collection published in 1756; in which a parallel is ingeniously drawn between human life and that liquor. It ends,

> "Say, then, physicians of each kind,
> Who cure the body or the mind,
> What harm in drinking can there be,
> Since punch and life so well agree?"

To the Idler, when collected in volumes, he added, beside the Essay on Epitaphs, and the Dissertation on those of Pope, an Essay on the Bravery of the English common Soldiers. He, however, omitted one of the original papers, which in the folio copy is No. 22[1].

Hawk. p. 364. [The profits accruing from the sale of this paper, and the subscriptions which, from the year 1756, he was receiving for the edition of Shakspeare by him proposed, were the only known means of his subsistence for a period of near four years, and we may suppose them hardly adequate to his wants, for, upon finding the balance of the account for the Dictionary against him, he [found it necessary to retrench his expenses. He gave up his house in Gough-square. Mrs. Williams went into lodgings. He retired to Gray's-Inn, and soon removed to chambers in the Inner Temple-lane, where he lived in poverty, total idleness, and the pride of literature. *Magna stat*

Murphy p. 90, 91.

[1] This paper may be found in Stockdale's supplemental volume, of Johnson's Miscellaneous Pieces.—BOSWELL.

nominis umbrâ. Mr. Fitzherbert (the father of Lord St. Helen's), a man distinguished through life for his benevolence and other amiable qualities, used to say, that he paid a morning visit to Johnson, intending from his chambers to send a letter into the city; but, to his great surprise, he found an authour by profession without pen, ink, or paper. The present Bishop of Salisbury was also among those who endeavoured, by constant attention, to soothe the cares of a mind which he knew to be afflicted with gloomy apprehensions.] Murphy p. 90, 91.

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. WARTON.

"(London), 14th April, 1758.

"DEAR SIR,—Your notes upon my poet were very acceptable. I beg that you will be so kind as to continue your searches. It will be reputable to my work, and suitable to your professorship, to have something of yours in the notes. As you have given no directions about your name, I shall therefore put it. I wish your brother would take the same trouble. A commentary must arise from the fortuitous discoveries of many men in devious walks of literature. Some of your remarks are on plays already printed: but I purpose to add an Appendix of Notes, so that nothing comes too late.

"You give yourself too much uneasiness, dear sir, about the loss of the papers[1]. The loss is nothing, if nobody has found them; nor even then, perhaps, if the numbers be known. You are not the only friend that has had the same mischance. You may repair your want out of a stock, which is deposited with Mr. Allen of Magdalen-Hall; or out of a parcel which I have just sent to Mr. Chambers[2] for the use of any body that will be so kind as to want them. Mr. Langtons are well; and Miss Roberts[3], whom I have at last brought to speak, upon the information which you gave me, that she had something to say. I am, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

[1] Receipts for Shakspeare.—WARTON.

[2] Then of Lincoln College.—WARTON.

[3] [Miss Roberts was a near relation of Mr. Langton; the subject on which she was to afford information does not appear.—ED.]

"TO MR. WARTON.

"(London,) 1st June, 1758.

"DEAR SIR,—You will receive this by Mr. Baretti, a gentleman particularly entitled to the notice and kindness of the professor of poesy. He has time but for a short stay, and will be glad to have it filled up with as much as he can hear and see.

"In recommending another to your favour, I ought not to omit thanks for the kindness which you have shown to myself. Have you any more notes on Shakspeare? I shall be glad of them.

"I see your pupil sometimes[1]; his mind is as exalted as his stature. I am half afraid of him; but he is no less amiable than formidable. He will, if the forwardness of his spring be not blasted, be a credit to you, and to the university. He brings some of my plays[2] with him, which he has my permission to show you, on condition you will hide them from every body else. I am, dear sir, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO BENNET LANGTON, ESQ. AT LANGTON.

"21st Sept. 1758.

"DEAR SIR,—I should be sorry to think that what engrosses the attention of my friend should have no part of mine. Your mind is now full of the fate of Dury[3]; but his fate is past, and nothing remains but to try what reflection will suggest to mitigate the terrours of a violent death, which is more formidable at the first glance, than on a nearer and more steady view. A violent death is never very painful: the only danger is, lest it should be unprovided. But if a man can be supposed to make no provision for death in war, what can be the state that would have awakened him to the care of futurity? When would that man have prepared himself to die, who went to seek death without preparation? What then can be the reason why we lament more him that dies of a wound, than him that dies of a fever? A man that languishes with disease, ends his life with more pain, but with less virtue: he leaves no example to his friends, nor bequeaths any honour to his descendants. The only reason why we lament a soldier's death, is, that we think

[1] Mr. Langton.—WARTON. [He was very tall.—ED.]

[2] Part of the impression of the Shakspeare, which Dr. Johnson conducted alone, and published by subscription. This edition came out in 1765.—WARTON.

[3] Major General Alexander Dury, of the first regiment of foot-guards, who fell in the gallant discharge of his duty, near St. Cas, in the well-known unfortunate expedition against France, in 1758. His lady and Mr. Langton's mother were sisters. He left an only son, Lieutenant Colonel Dury, who has a company in the same regiment.—BOSWELL.

he might have lived longer; yet this cause of grief is common to many other kinds of death, which are not so passionately bewailed. The truth is, that every death is violent which is the effect of accident; every death, which is not gradually brought on by the miseries of age, or when life is extinguished for any other reason than that it is burnt out. He that dies before sixty, of a cold or consumption, dies, in reality, by a violent death; yet his death is borne with patience, only because the cause of his untimely end is silent and invisible. Let us endeavour to see things as they are, and then inquire whether we ought to complain. Whether to see life as it is, will give us much consolation, I know not; but the consolation which is drawn from truth, if any there be, is solid and durable: that which may be derived from errour, must be, like its original, fallacious and fugitive. I am, dear, dear sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO BENNET LANGTON, ESQ. AT LANGTON[1].

"9th Jan. 1758. [1759.]

"DEAREST SIR,—I must have indeed slept very fast, not to have been awakened by your letter. None of your suspicions are true; I am not much richer than when you left me; and what is worse, my omission of an answer to your first letter will prove that I am not much wiser. But I go on as I formerly did, designing to be some time or other both rich and wise; and yet cultivate neither mind nor fortune. Do you take notice of my example, and learn the danger of delay. When I was as you are now, towering in [the] confidence of twenty-one, little did I suspect that I should be, at forty-nine, what I now am[2].

"But you do not seem to need my admonition. You are busy in acquiring and in communicating knowledge, and while you are studying, enjoy the end of study, by making others

[1] [This letter was by Mr. Boswell misplaced under the year 1758, of which it bears the date. Johnson frequently, at the beginning of a new year, continued inadvertently the date of the old one. But the reference to Cleone, which was acted in the autumn of 1758, shows this letter to have been written in January, 1759, about the time when pecuniary distress obliged him to break up his establishment in Gough-square, and retire to chambers, first in Staple-inn, and afterwards in the Inner Temple; which he alludes to in this letter by saying that he has "given up housekeeping." In the list of Johnson's residences (*ante*, p. 81), the editor, misled by the date of this letter, the error of which he had not then discovered, placed the time of Johnson's residence at Staple-inn a year too soon. A subsequent letter to Miss Porter ascertains the point.—ED.]

[2] [If the reader will look back to Johnson's deplorable situation when he was about the age of twenty-one, he will be inclined to think that he might rather have prided himself at having attained to the station which he now held in society.—ED.]

wiser and happier. I was much pleased with the tale that you told me of being tutour to your sisters. I, who have no sisters nor brothers, look with some degree of innocent envy on those who may be said to be born to friends [1]; and cannot see, without wonder, how rarely that native union is afterwards regarded. It sometimes, indeed, happens, that some supervenient cause of discord may overpower this original amity; but it seems to me more frequently thrown away with levity, or lost by negligence, than destroyed by injury or violence. We tell the ladies that good wives make good husbands; I believe it is a more certain position that good brothers make good sisters.

"I am satisfied with your stay at home, as Juvenal with his friend's retirement to Cumæ: I know that your absence is best, though it be not best for me.

> 'Quamvis digressu veteris confusus amici,
> Laudo tamen vacuis quod sedem figere Cumis
> Destinet, atque unum civem donare Sibyllæ.'

"*Langton* is a good *Cumæ*, but who must be Sibylla? Mrs. Langton is as wise as Sibyl, and as good; and will live, if my wishes can prolong life, till she shall in time be as old. But she differs in this, that she has not scattered her precepts in the wind, at least not those which she bestowed upon you.

"The two Wartons just looked into the town, and were taken to see *Cleone*, where, David [Garrick] says, they were starved for want of company to keep them warm. David and Doddy [2] have had a new quarrel, and, I think, cannot conveniently quarrel any more. 'Cleone' was well acted by all the characters, but Bellamy [3] left nothing to be desired. I went the first night, and supported it as well as I might; for Doddy, you know, is my patron, and I would not desert him. The play was very well received. Doddy, after the danger was over, went every night to the stage-side, and cried at the distress of poor Cleone.

[1] [See, however (*ante*, p. 3), Johnson's observation to Mrs. Piozzi, from which, as well as from other circumstances, it may be inferred that he did not, while he possessed it, sufficiently appreciate the happiness of fraternal intercourse. Mr. Gibbon, in his memoirs, alludes to this subject with good taste and feeling: "From my childhood to the present hour, I have deeply and sincerely regretted my sister, whose life was somewhat prolonged, and whom I remember to have seen an amiable infant. The relation of a brother and a sister, particularly if they do not marry, appears to me of a very singular nature. It is a familiar and tender friendship with a female much about our own age; an affection perhaps softened by the secret influence of the sex, but pure from any mixture of sensual desire—the sole species of Platonic love that can be indulged with truth and without danger."—*Mem. p.* 25.—ED.]

[2] Mr. Dodsley, the authour of Cleone.—BOSWELL.

[3] [The well-known Miss George Anne Bellamy, who played the heroine.—ED.]

"I have left off housekeeping, and therefore made presents of the game which you were pleased to send me. The pheasant I gave to Mr. Richardson[1], the bustard to Dr. Lawrence, and the pot I placed with Miss Williams, to be eaten by myself. She desires that her compliments and good wishes may be accepted by the family; and I make the same request for myself.

"Mr. Reynolds has within these few days raised his price to twenty guineas a head[2], and Miss[3] is much employed in miniatures. I know not any body (else) whose prosperity has increased since you left them.

"Murphy is to have his 'Orphan of China' acted next month; and is therefore, I suppose, happy.' I wish I could tell you of any great good to which I was approaching, but at present my prospects do not much delight me; however, I am always pleased when I find that you, dear sir, remember your affectionate, humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

In 1759, in the month of January, his mother died at the great age of ninety, an event which deeply affected him; not that "his mind had acquired no firmness by the contemplation of mortality[4];" but that his reverential affection for her was not abated by years, as indeed he retained all his tender feelings even to the latest period of his life. I have been told, that he regretted much his not having gone to visit his mother for several years previous to her

Hawk. p. 395.

[1] The authour of Clarissa.—BOSWELL.

[2] [Sir Joshua afterwards greatly advanced his price. I have been informed by Sir Thomas Lawrence, his admirer and rival, that in 1787 his prices were two hundred guineas for the *whole length*, one hundred for the *half-length*, seventy for the *kit-cat*, and fifty for (what is called) the *three-quarters*. But even on these prices some increase must have been made, as Horace Walpole said, "Sir Joshua, in his old age, becomes avaricious. He had one thousand guineas for my picture of the three ladies Waldegrave."—*Walpoliana*. This picture are *half-lengths* of the three ladies on one canvas.—ED.]

[3] [Miss Reynolds, the sister of Sir Joshua.—ED.]

[4] [Mr. Boswell contradicts Hawkins, for the mere pleasure, as it would seem, of doing so. The reader must observe that Mr. Boswell's work is full of anecdotes of Johnson's want of firmness in contemplating mortality: and though Johnson may have been *in theory* an affectionate son, there is reason to fear that he had never visited, and, consequently, not seen his mother since 1737. Mr. Boswell alleges as an excuse, that he was engaged in literary labours, which confined him to London. Such an excuse for an absence of *twenty years* is idle; besides, it is stated that Johnson visited Ashbourn about 1740 (*ante*, p. 51), Tunbridge Wells in 1748 (*ante*, p. 165), Oxford in 1754 (*ante*, p. 252). We shall see presently, that Johnson felt remorse for this neglect of his parent.—ED.]

death. But he was constantly engaged in literary labours which confined him to London; and though he had not the comfort of seeing his aged parent, he contributed liberally to her support.

Malone. "TO MRS. JOHNSON, IN LICHFIELD[1].

"13th Jan. 1758[2].

"HONOURED MADAM,—The account which Miss [Porter] gives me of your health pierces my heart. God comfort and preserve you and save you, for the sake of Jesus Christ.

"I would have miss read to you from time to time the Passion of our Saviour, and sometimes the sentences in the Communion Service, beginning—*Come unto me, all ye that travel and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

"I have just now read a physical book, which inclines me to think that a strong infusion of the bark would do you good. Do, dear mother, try it.

"Pray, send me your blessing, and forgive all that I have done amiss to you. And whatever you would have done, and what debts you would have paid first, or any thing else that you would direct, let Miss [Porter] put it down; I shall endeavour to obey you.

"I have got twelve guineas[3] to send you, but unhappily am at a loss how to send it to-night. If I cannot send it to-night, it will come by the next post.

"Pray, do not omit any thing mentioned in this letter. God bless you for ever and ever.—I am your dutiful son,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Malone. "TO MISS PORTER AT MRS. JOHNSON'S, IN LICHFIELD.

"16th Jan. 1759.

"MY DEAR MISS,—I think myself obliged to you beyond all expression of gratitude for your care of my dear mother. God

[1] Since the publication of the third edition of this work, the following letters of Dr. Johnson, occasioned by the last illness of his mother, were obligingly communicated to Mr. Malone, by the Rev. Dr. Vyse. They are placed here agreeably to the chronological order almost uniformly observed by the authour; and so strongly evince Dr. Johnson's piety and tenderness of heart, that every reader must be gratified by their insertion.—MALONE.

[2] Written by mistake for 1759, as the subsequent letters show [see *ante*, p. 323]. In the next letter, he had inadvertently fallen into the same errour, but corrected it. On the *outside* of the letter of the 13th was written by another hand—"Pray acknowledge the receipt of this by return of post, without fail."—MALONE.

[3] Six of these twelve guineas Johnson appears to have borrowed from Mr. Allen, the printer. See Hawkins's *Life of Johnson*, p. 366, n.—MALONE.

grant it may not be without success. Tell Kitty[1] that I shall never forget her tenderness for her mistress. Whatever you can do, continue to do. My heart is very full.

"I hope you received twelve guineas on Monday. I found a way of sending them by means of the postmaster, after I had written my letter, and hope they came safe. I will send you more in a few days. God bless you all. I am, my dear, your most obliged and most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON.

"Over the leaf is a letter to my mother."

"16th Jan. 1759.

"DEAR HONOURED MOTHER,—Your weakness afflicts me beyond what I am willing to communicate to you. I do not think you unfit to face death, but I know not how to bear the thought of losing you. Endeavour to do all you [can] for yourself. Eat as much as you can.

"I pray often for you; do you pray for me. I have nothing to add to my last letter. I am, dear, dear mother, your dutiful son, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MRS. JOHNSON, IN LICHFIELD.

"18th Jan. 1759.

"DEAR HONOURED MOTHER,—I fear you are too ill for long letters; therefore I will only tell you, you have from me all the regard that can possibly subsist in the heart. I pray God to bless you for evermore, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen. Malone.

"Let miss write to me every post, however short.

"I am, dear mother, your dutiful son, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MISS PORTER, AT MRS. JOHNSON'S, IN LICHFIELD.

"20th Jan. 1759.

"DEAR MISS,—I will, if it be possible, come down to you. God grant I may yet [find] my dear mother breathing and sensible. Do not tell her lest I disappoint her. If I miss to write next post, I am on the road. I am, my dearest miss, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON. Malone.

"*On the other side.*"

[1] Catherine Chambers, Mrs. Johnson's maid-servant. She died in October, 1767. See Dr. Johnson's *Prayers and Meditations*, p. 71: "Sunday, Oct. 18, 1767. Yesterday, Oct. 17, I took my leave for ever of my dear old friend, Catherine Chambers, who came to live with my mother about 1724, and has been but little parted from us since. She buried my father, my brother, and my mother. She is now fifty-eight years old."—MALONE.

"20th Jan. 1759.

"DEAR HONOURED MOTHER[1],—Neither your condition nor your character make it fit for me to say much. You have been the best mother, and I believe the best woman in the world. I thank you for your indulgence to me, and beg forgiveness of all that I have done ill, and all that I have omitted to do well[2]. God grant you his Holy Spirit, and receive you to everlasting happiness, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen. Lord Jesus receive your spirit. Amen.—I am, dear, dear mother, your dutiful son,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Malone. "TO MISS PORTER, IN LICHFIELD.

"23d Jan. 1759[3].

"You will conceive my sorrow for the loss of my mother, of the best mother. If she were to live again, surely I should behave better to her. But she is happy, and what is past is nothing to her; and for me, since I cannot repair my faults to her, I hope repentance will efface them. I return you and all those that have been good to her my sincerest thanks, and pray God to repay you all with infinite advantage. Write to me, and comfort me, dear child. I shall be glad likewise, if Kitty will write to me. I shall send a bill of twenty pounds in a few days, which I thought to have brought to my mother; but God suffered it not. I have not power or composure to say much more. God bless you, and bless us all. I am, dear miss, your affectionate humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Pearson MSS. ["TO MISS LUCY PORTER.

"25th Jan. 1759.

(The beginning of the writing torn and lost.)

. . . . . .

"You will forgive me if I am not yet so composed as to give any directions about any thing. But you are wiser and better than I, and I shall be pleased with all that you shall do. It is not of any use for me now to come down[4]; nor can I bear the place.

[1] This letter was written on the second leaf of the preceding, addressed to Miss Porter.—MALONE.

[2] So, in the prayer which he composed on this occasion: "Almighty God, merciful Father, in whose hands are life and death, sanctify unto me the sorrow which I now feel. *Forgive me whatever I have done unkindly to my mother, and whatever I have omitted to do kindly.* Make me to remember her good precepts and good example, and to reform my life according to thy holy word, &c."—*Prayers and Meditations*, p. 31.—MALONE.

[3] Mrs. Johnson probably died on the 20th or 21st January, and was buried on the day this letter was written.—MALONE.

[4] [Mr. Murphy states: "With this supply (the price of Rasselas) Johnson set out for Lichfield; but did not arrive in time to close the eyes of a parent

If you want any directions, Mr. Howard[1] will advise you. The twenty pounds I could not get a bill for to-night, but will send it on Saturday. I am, my dear, your affectionate servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MRS. LUCY PORTER. Pearson MSS.

"6th Feb. 1759.

"DEAR MISS,—I have no reason to forbear writing, but that it makes my heart heavy, and I had nothing particular to say which might not be delayed to the next post; but had no thoughts of ceasing to correspond with my dear Lucy, the only person now left in the world with whom I think myself connected. There needed not my dear mother's desire, for every heart must lean to somebody, and I have nobody but you; in whom I put all my little affairs with too much confidence to desire you to keep receipts as you prudently proposed.

"If you and Kitty will keep the house, I think I shall like it best. Kitty may carry on the trade for herself, keeping her own stock apart, and laying aside any money that she receives for any of the goods, which her good mistress has left behind her. I do not see, if this scheme be followed, any need of appraising the books. My mother's debts, dear mother, I suppose I may pay with little difficulty; and the little trade may go silently forward. I fancy Kitty can do nothing better; and I shall not want to put her out of a house, where she has lived so long, and with so much virtue. I am very sorry that she is ill, and earnestly hope that she will soon recover; let her know that I have the highest value for her, and would do any thing for her advantage. Let her think of this proposal. I do not see any likelier method by which she may pass the remaining part of her life in quietness and competence.

"You must have what part of the house you please, while you are inclined to stay in it; but I flatter myself with the hope that you and I shall some time pass our days together. I am very solitary and comfortless, but will not invite you to come hither till I can have hope of making you live here so as not to dislike your situation. Pray, my dearest, write to me as often as you can. I am, dear madam, your affectionate humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

whom he loved. He attended the funeral, which, as appears among his memorandums, was on the 23d of January, 1759." It is clear, from all these letters, that he did not personally attend on that occasion, and the memorandum mentioned must have referred to the date or expenses of the funeral, and not to his own presence. Rasselas was not *written*, nor of course, it may be presumed, *sold*, till two months later.—ED.]

[1] [Mr. Howard was in the law, and resided in the Close. He was grandfather of the present lady of Sir Robert Wilmot, Bart. of Osmaston, near Derby.—HARWOOD.]

Hawk. p. 367.

[No. 41 of the Idler, though it takes the character of a letter to the authour, was written by Johnson himself on his mother's death, and may be supposed to describe as truly as pathetically his sentiments on the separation of friends and relations[1].]

Pearson MSS.

["TO MRS. LUCY PORTER.

"1st March, 1759[2].

"DEAR MADAM,—I thought your last letter long in coming; and did not require or expect such an inventory of little things as you have sent me. I could have taken your word for a matter of much greater value. I am glad that Kitty is better; let her be paid first, as my dear, dear mother ordered, and then let me know at once the sum necessary to discharge her other debts, and I will find it you very soon.

"I beg, my dear, that you would act for me without the least scruple, for I can repose myself very confidently upon your prudence, and hope we shall never have reason to love each other less. I shall take it very kindly if you make it a rule to write to me once at least every week, for I am now very desolate, and am loth to be universally forgotten. I am, dear sweet, your affectionate servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

Ed.

Soon after his mother's death, he wrote his "RASSELAS, PRINCE OF ABYSSINIA*: [which he modestly calls, in a subsequent letter to Miss Porter, "a little story-book"] concerning the publication of which Sir John Hawkins guesses vaguely and idly[3], instead of having taken the trouble to inform himself with authentick precision. Not to trouble my readers with a repetition of the knight's reveries, I have to mention, that the late Mr. Strahan the printer told me, that Johnson wrote it, that with the profits, he might defray the expense of his mother's funeral, and pay

[1] [But it is observable that the Idlers which now bear the dates of the 13th and 20th January are on trivial subjects, and are even written in a vein of pleasantry.—ED.]

[2] [Johnson had written the figure 8 instead of 9, which is evidently a mistake. —HARWOOD. See *ante*, p. 323.—ED.]

[3] [Sir John Hawkins does not "guess vaguely and idly," but after saying that there were vague reports on the subject, he gives an account substantially the same as Mr. Boswell's. The only difference is, that Sir J. Hawkins says that he had before meditated such a work, the execution of which was now accelerated by the spur of necessity.—ED.]

some little debts which she had left. He told Sir Joshua Reynolds, that he composed it in the evenings of one week[1], sent it to the press in portions as it was written, and had never since read it over[2]. Mr. Strahan, Mr. Johnston, and Mr. Dodsley, purchased it for a hundred pounds, but afterwards paid him twenty-five pounds more, when it came to a second edition.

Considering the large sums which have been received for compilations, and works requiring not much more genius than compilations, we cannot but wonder at the very low price which he was content to receive for this admirable performance; which, though he had written nothing else, would have rendered his name immortal in the world of literature. None of his writings has been so extensively diffused over Europe; for it has been translated into most, if not all, of the modern languages. This tale, with all the charms of oriental imagery, and all the force and beauty of which the English language is capable, leads us through the most important scenes of human life, and shows us that this stage of our being is full of "vanity and vexation of spirit." To those who look no further than the present life, or who maintain that human nature has not fallen from the state in which it was created, the instruction of this sublime story will be of no avail. But they who think justly, and feel with strong sensibility, will listen with eagerness and admiration to its truth and wisdom. Voltaire's CANDIDE, written to refute the system of Optimism, which it has accomplished with brilliant success, is wonderfully similar in its

[1] RASSELAS was published in March or April, 1759.—BOSWELL.

[2] See under June 2, 1781. Finding it then accidentally in a chaise with Mr. Boswell, he read it eagerly.—This was doubtless long after his declaration to Sir Joshua Reynolds.—MALONE.

plan and conduct to Johnson's RASSELAS; insomuch, that I have heard Johnson say, that if they had not been published so closely one after the other that there was not time for imitation, it would have been in vain to deny that the scheme of that which came latest was taken from the other. Though the proposition illustrated by both these works was the same, namely, that in our present state there is more evil than good, the intention of the writers was very different. Voltaire, I am afraid, meant only by wanton profaneness to obtain a sportive victory over religion, and to discredit the belief of a superintending Providence: Johnson meant, by showing the unsatisfactory nature of things temporal, to direct the hopes of man to things eternal. Rasselas, as was observed to me by a very accomplished lady, may be considered as a more enlarged and more deeply philosophical discourse in prose, upon the interesting truth, which in his "Vanity of Human Wishes" he had so successfully enforced in verse.

The fund of thinking which this work contains is such, that almost every sentence of it may furnish a subject of long meditation. I am not satisfied if a year passes without my having read it through; and at every perusal, my admiration of the mind which produced it is so highly raised, that I can scarcely believe that I had the honour of enjoying the intimacy of such a man.

I restrain myself from quoting passages from this excellent work, or even referring to them, because I should not know what to select, or, rather, what to omit. I shall, however, transcribe one, as it shows how well he could state the arguments of those who believe in the appearance of departed spirits; a doctrine which it is a mistake to suppose that he himself ever positively held:

"If all your fear be of apparitions (said the prince), I will promise you safety: there is no danger from the dead; he that is once buried will be seen no more.

"That the dead are seen no more (said Imlac), I will not undertake to maintain, against the concurrent and unvaried testimony of all ages, and of all nations. There is no people, rude or learned, among whom apparitions of the dead are not related and believed. This opinion, which prevails as far as human nature is diffused, could become universal only by its truth[1]; those that never heard of one another, would not have agreed in a tale which nothing but experience can make credible. That it is doubted by single cavillers, can very little weaken the general evidence; and some who deny it with their tongues, confess it by their fears."

Notwithstanding my high admiration of Rasselas, I will not maintain that the "morbid melancholy" in Johnson's constitution may not, perhaps, have made life appear to him more insipid and unhappy than it generally is: for I am sure that he had less enjoyment from it than I have. Yet, whatever additional shade his own particular sensations may have thrown on his representation of life, attentive observation and close inquiry have convinced me, that there is too much reality in the gloomy picture. The truth, however, is, that we judge of the happiness and misery of life differently at different times, according to the state of our changeable frame. I always remember a remark made to me by a Turkish lady, educated in France: "*Ma foi, monsieur, notre bonheur depend de la façon que notre sang circule*[2]." This have I learnt from a pretty hard course of experience, and would, from sincere benevolence, impress upon all who honour

[1] [This is a mere sophism; all ages and all nations are *not* agreed on this point, though such a belief may have existed in *particular persons*, in all ages and all nations. He might as well have said that *insanity* was the natural and true state of the human mind, because it has existed in all nations and all ages.—Ed.]

[2] [Mr. Boswell no doubt fancied these words had some meaning, or he would hardly have quoted them; but what that meaning is the editor cannot guess. —Ed.]

this book with a perusal, that until a steady conviction is obtained, that the present life is an imperfect state, and only a passage to a better, if we comply with the divine scheme of progressive improvement; and also that it is a part of the mysterious plan of Providence, that intellectual beings must "be made perfect through suffering;" there will be a continual recurrence of disappointment and uneasiness. But if we walk with hope in "the mid-day sun" of revelation, our temper and disposition will be such, that the comforts and enjoyments in our way will be relished, while we patiently support the inconveniences and pains. After much speculation and various reasonings, I acknowledge myself convinced of the truth of Voltaire's conclusion, "*Après tout c'est un monde passable.*" But we must not think too deeply:

"———— where ignorance is bliss,
'Tis folly to be wise,"

is, in many respects, more than poetically just. Let us cultivate, under the command of good principles, "*la theorie des sensations agréables;*" and, as Mr. Burke once admirably counselled a grave and anxious gentleman, "live pleasant."

The effect of Rasselas, and of Johnson's other moral tales, is thus beautifully illustrated by Mr. Courtenay:

"Impressive truth, in splendid fiction drest,
Checks the vain wish, and calms the troubled breast;
O'er the dark mind a light celestial throws,
And sooths the angry passions to repose;
As oil effus'd illumes and smooths the deep,
When round the bark the foaming surges sweep."

It will be recollected, that during all this year he carried on his Idler. This paper was in such high estimation before it was collected into volumes, that it was seized on with avidity by various publishers of newspapers and magazines, to enrich their pub-

lications. Johnson, to put a stop to this unfair proceeding, wrote for the Universal Chronicle the following advertisement; in which there is, perhaps, more pomp of words than the occasion demanded:

"London, Jan. 5, 1759. ADVERTISEMENT. The proprietors of the paper entitled 'The Idler,' having found that those essays are inserted in the newspapers and magazines with so little regard to justice or decency, that the Universal Chronicle, in which they first appear, is not always mentioned, think it necessary to declare to the publishers of those collections, that however patiently they have hitherto endured these injuries, made yet more injurious by contempt, they have now determined to endure them no longer. They have already seen essays, for which a very large price is paid, transferred, with the most shameless rapacity, into the weekly or monthly compilations, and their right, at least for the present, alienated from them, before they could themselves be said to enjoy it. But they would not willingly be thought to want tenderness, even for men by whom no tenderness hath been shown. The past is without remedy, and shall be without resentment. But those who have been thus busy with their sickles in the fields of their neighbours are henceforward to take notice, that the time of impunity is at an end. Whoever shall, without our leave, lay the hand of rapine upon our papers, is to expect that we shall vindicate our due, by the means which justice prescribes, and which are warranted by the immemorial prescriptions of honourable trade. We shall lay hold, in our turn, on their copies, degrade them from the pomp of wide margin and diffuse typography, contract them into a narrow space, and sell them at an humble price; yet not with a view of growing rich by confiscations, for we think not much better of money got by punishment than by crimes. We shall therefore, when our losses are repaid, give what profit shall remain to the *Magdalens*; for we know not who can be more properly taxed for the support of penitent prostitutes, than prostitutes in whom there yet appears neither penitence nor shame."

No doubt he was also proceeding, though slowly, in his edition of Shakspeare. He, however, from that liberality which never failed, when called upon to assist other labourers in literature, found time to translate, for Mrs. Lenox's English version of Brumoy,

"A Dissertation on the Greek Comedy †," and "The General Conclusion of the Book †[1]."

An inquiry into the state of foreign countries was an object that seems at all times to have interested Johnson. Hence Mr. Newbery found no great difficulty in persuading him to write the Introduction * to a collection of voyages and travels published by him under the title of "The World Displayed:" the first volume of which appeared this year, and the remaining volumes in subsequent years.

I would ascribe to this year the following letter to a son of one of his early friends at Lichfield, Mr. Joseph Simpson, barrister, and authour of a tract, entitled "Reflections on the Study of the Law."

"TO JOSEPH SIMPSON, ESQ.

"DEAR SIR,—Your father's inexorability not only grieves but amazes me: he is your father; he was always accounted a wise man; nor do I remember any thing to the disadvantage of his good nature; but in his refusal to assist you there is neither good nature, fatherhood, nor wisdom. It is the practice of good nature to overlook faults which have already, by the consequences, punished the delinquent. It is natural for a father to think more favourably than others of his children; and it is always wise to give assistance, while a little help will prevent the necessity of greater.

"If you married imprudently, you miscarried at your own hazard, at an age when you had a right of choice. It would be hard if the man might not choose his own wife, who has a right to plead before the judges of his country.

"If your imprudence has ended in difficulties and inconveniences, you are yourself to support them; and, with the help of a little better health, you would support them and conquer them. Surely, that want which accident and sickness produce is to be supported in every region of humanity, though there were neither friends nor fathers in the world. You have certainly from your father the highest claim of charity, though none of right: and

[1] [In Mr. Park's edition of the *Noble Authors* (vol. iv. p. 259), it is stated that Mrs. Lenox's Translation of Brumoy's Greek Theatre had a "*Preface*," written by Lord Orrery; who also translated "*The Discourse upon the Theatre of the Greeks, the Origin of Tragedy*, and *the Parallel of the Theatres*;" but he cites no authority.—ED.]

therefore I would counsel you to omit no decent nor manly degree of importunity. Your debts in the whole are not large, and of the whole but a small part is troublesome. Small debts are like small shot; they are rattling on every side, and can scarcely be escaped without a wound: great debts are like cannon; of loud noise, but little danger. You must, therefore, be enabled to discharge petty debts, that you may have leisure, with security, to struggle with the rest. Neither the great nor little debts disgrace you. I am sure you have my esteem for the courage with which you contracted them, and the spirit with which you endure them. I wish my esteem could be of more use. I have been invited, or have invited myself, to several parts of the kingdom; and will not incommode my dear Lucy by coming to Lichfield, while her present lodging is of any use to her [1]. I hope, in a few days, to be at leisure, and to make visits. Whither I shall fly is matter of no importance. A man unconnected is at home every where; unless he may be said to be at home no where. I am sorry, dear sir, that where you have parents, a man of your merits should not have a home. I wish I could give it you. I am, my dear sir, affectionately yours,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

He now refreshed himself by an excursion to Oxford, of which the following short characteristical notice, in his own words, is preserved:

"———— is now making tea for me. I have been in my gown ever since I came here [2]. It was, at my first coming, quite new and handsome. I have swum thrice, which I had disused for many years. I have proposed to Vansittart [3] climbing over the wall, but he has refused me. And I have clapped my hands till they are sore, at Dr. King's speech [4]." Gent. Mag. 1785. p. 288.

His negro servant, Francis Barber, having left him, and been some time at sea, not pressed as has been supposed, but with his own consent, it appears from

[1] [She resided in the house which, by his mother's death, was now become the property of Johnson. It appears that there was not accommodation for an additional inmate.—ED.]

[2] [Lord Stowell informs me that he prided himself in being, during his visits to Oxford, accurately academic in all points; and he wore his gown almost *ostentatiously*.—ED.]

[3] See *post*, p. 329.—ED.]

[4] [Dr. King's speech at the installation of the Earl of Westmoreland as chancellor of the university.—ED.]

a letter to John Wilkes, Esq. from Dr. Smollett, that his master kindly interested himself in procuring his release from a state of life of which Johnson always
Aug. 31, 1773. expressed the utmost abhorrence. He once said, "No man will be a sailor who has contrivance enough to get himself into a jail; for being in a ship is being in a jail, with the chance of being drowned." And at another
Sept. 23, 1773. time, "A man in a jail has more room, better food, and commonly better company." The letter was as follows:

"Chelsea, 16th March, 1759.

"DEAR SIR,—I am again your petitioner, in behalf of that great CHAM[1] of literature, Samuel Johnson. His black servant, whose name is Francis Barber, has been pressed on board the Stag frigate, Captain Angel, and our lexicographer is in great distress. He says the boy is a sickly lad, of a delicate frame, and particularly subject to a malady in his throat, which renders him very unfit for his majesty's service. You know what matter of animosity the said Johnson has against you: and I dare say you desire no other opportunity of resenting it, than that of laying him under an obligation. He was humble enough to desire my assistance on this occasion, though he and I were never cater-cousins; and I gave him to understand that I would make application to my friend Mr. Wilkes, who, perhaps, by his interest with Dr. Hay and Mr. Elliot, might be able to procure the discharge of his lacquey. It would be superfluous to say more on the subject, which I leave to your own consideration; but I cannot let slip this opportunity of declaring that I am, with the most inviolable esteem and attachment, dear sir, your affectionate, obliged, humble servant,

"T. SMOLLETT."

[1] In my first edition this word was printed *Chum*, as it appears in one of Mr. Wilkes's Miscellanies, and I animadverted on Dr. Smollett's ignorance; for which let me propitiate the *manes* of that ingenious and benevolent gentleman. CHUM was certainly a mistaken reading for CHAM, the title of the Sovereign of Tartary, which is well applied to Johnson, the Monarch of Literature; and was an epithet familiar to Smollett. See "Roderick Random," chap. 56. For this correction I am indebted to Lord Palmerston, whose talents and literary acquirements accord well with his respectable pedigree of Temple.—BOSWELL.

After the publication of the second edition of this work, the authour was furnished by Mr. Abercrombie, of Philadelphia, with the copy of a letter written by Dr. John Armstrong, the poet, to Dr. Smollett, at Leghorn, containing the following paragraph:

"As to the K. Bench patriot, it is hard to say from what motive he published a letter of yours asking some trifling favour of him in behalf of somebody for whom the great CHAM of literature, Mr. Johnson, had interested himself."—MALONE.

Mr. Wilkes, who upon all occasions has acted, as a private gentleman, with most polite liberality, applied to his friend Sir George Hay, then one of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty; and Francis Barber was discharged[1], as he has told me, without any wish of his own. He found his old master in Chambers in the Inner Temple, and returned to his service.

[The date of Dr. Johnson's first acquaintance with Mrs. Montagu is not ascertained, but it probably began about this period. We find, in this year, the first of the many applications which he is known to have made to the extensive and unwearied charity of that excellent woman.] Ed.

["DR. JOHNSON TO MRS MONTAGU[2].

"9th June, 1759. Montagu MSS.

"MADAM,—I am desired by Mrs. Williams to sign receipts with her name for the subscribers which you have been pleased to procure, and to return her humble thanks for your favour, which was conferred with all the grace that elegance can add to beneficence. I am, madam, your most obedient and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

What particular new scheme of life Johnson had in view this year, I have not discovered; but that he meditated one of some sort, is clear from his private devotions, in which we find, [24th March,] "the change of outward things which I am now to make;" and "Grant me the grace of thy Holy Spirit, that the course which I am now beginning may proceed according to thy laws, and end in the enjoyment of thy Prayers & Med. p. 30. 40.

[1] [He was not discharged till June, 1760. How the discharge (if, indeed, it was granted on this application) came to be so long delayed does not appear.—Ed.]

[2] [This and several other letters, which will be found in the proper places, (marked in the margin *Montagu MSS.*), the Editor owes to the kindness and liberality of the present Lord Rokeby, the nephew and heir of Mrs. Montagu, and the Editor of her *Letters*—a work which the literary world desires to see continued. It is necessary to request the attention of the reader to the warm terms in which Johnson so frequently expresses his admiration and esteem for Mrs. Montagu, as we shall see that he afterwards took another tone.—Ed.]

favour." But he did not, in fact, make any external or visible change.

ED. [The change of life of which Mr. Boswell could discover no trace was probably the breaking up his establishment in Gough-square, where he had resided for ten years, and retiring to chambers in Staple-inn; while Mrs. Williams went into lodgings. This economical arrangement, as we learn from the following letter, communicated by Mrs. Pearson, through Dr. Harwood, took place just at this period.

Pearson MSS. "TO MRS. LUCY PORTER.

"23d March, 1759.

"DEAR MADAM,—I beg your pardon for having so long omitted to write. One thing or other has put me off. I have this day moved my things, and you are now to direct to me at Staple-inn, London. I hope, my dear, you are well, and Kitty mends. I wish her success in her trade. I am going to publish a little story book [1], which I will send you when it is out. Write to me, my dearest girl, for I am always glad to hear from you. I am, my dear, your humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

At this time there being a competition among the architects of London to be employed in the building of Blackfriars-bridge, a question was very warmly agitated whether semicircular or elliptical arches were preferable. In the design offered by Mr. Mylne, the elliptical form was adopted, and therefore it was the great object of his rivals to attack it. Johnson's regard for his friend Mr. Gwyn induced him to engage in this controversy against Mr. Mylne [2]; and after

[1] [Johnson here alludes to his "Rasselas."—HARWOOD.]

[2] Sir John Hawkins has given a long detail of it, in that manner vulgarly, but significantly, called *rigmarole;* in which, amidst an ostentatious exhibition of arts and artists, he talks of "proportions of a column being taken from that of the human figure, and *adjusted by Nature*—masculine and feminine—in a man, *sesquioctave* of the head, and in a woman *sesquinonal;* nor has he failed to introduce a jargon of musical terms, which do not seem much to correspond with the subject, but serve to make up the heterogeneous mass. To follow the knight through all this, would be an useless fatigue to myself, and not a little disgusting to my readers. I shall, therefore, only make a few remarks upon his statement.—He seems to exult in having detected Johnson in procuring

being at considerable pains to study the subject, he wrote three several letters in the Gazetteer, in opposition to his plan.

If it should be remarked that this was a controversy which lay quite out of Johnson's way, let it be remembered, that after all, his employing his powers of reasoning and eloquence upon a subject which he had studied on the moment, is not more strange than what we often observe in lawyers, who, as *Quicquid agunt homines* is the matter of lawsuits, are sometimes obliged to pick up a temporary knowledge of an art or science, of which they understood nothing till their brief was delivered, and appear to be much masters of it. In like manner, members of the legislature frequently introduce and

"from a person eminently skilled in mathematicks and the principles of architecture, answers to a string of questions drawn up by himself, touching the comparative strength of semicircular and elliptical arches." Now I cannot conceive how Johnson could have acted more wisely. Sir John complains that the opinion of that excellent mathematician, Mr. Thomas Simpson, did not preponderate in favour of the semicircular arch. But he should have known, that however eminent Mr. Simpson was in the higher parts of abstract mathematical science, he was little versed in mixed and practical mechanicks. Mr. Muller, of Woolwich Academy, the scholastick father of all the great engineers which this country has employed for forty years, decided the question by declaring clearly in favour of the elliptical arch.

It is ungraciously suggested, that Johnson's motive for opposing Mr. Mylne's scheme may have been his prejudice against him as a native of North Britain; when, in truth, as has been stated, he gave the aid of his able pen to a *friend*, who was one of the candidates; and so far was he from having any illiberal antipathy to Mr. Mylne, that he afterwards lived with that gentleman upon very agreeable terms of acquaintance, and dined with him at his house. Sir John Hawkins, indeed, gives full vent to his own prejudice in abusing Blackfriars-bridge, calling it "an edifice, in which beauty and symmetry are in vain sought for; by which the citizens of London have perpetuated their own disgrace, and subjected a whole nation to the reproach of foreigners." Whoever has contemplated *placido lumine*, this stately, elegant, and airy structure, which has so fine an effect, especially on approaching the capital on that quarter, must wonder at such unjust and ill-tempered censure; and I appeal to all foreigners of good taste, whether this bridge be not one of the most distinguished ornaments of London. As to the stability of the fabrick, it is certain that the city of London took every precaution to have the best Portland stone for it; but as this is to be found in the quarries belonging to the publick, under the direction of the lords of the treasury, it so happened that parliamentary interest, which is often the bane of fair pursuits, thwarted their endeavours. Notwithstanding this disadvantage, it is well known that not only has Blackfriars-bridge never sunk either in its foundation or in its arches, which were so much the subject of contest, but any injuries which it has suffered from the effects of severe frosts have been already, in some measure, repaired with sounder stone, and every necessary renewal can be completed at a moderate expense.—BOSWELL.

expatiate upon subjects of which they have informed themselves for the occasion.

Pearson MSS. ["DR. JOHNSON TO MISS LUCY PORTER.

"10th May, 1759.

"DEAR MADAM,—I am almost ashamed to tell you that all your letters came safe, and that I have been always very well, but hindered, I hardly know how, from writing. I sent, last week, some of my works, one for you, one for your aunt Hunter, who was with my poor dear mother when she died, one for Mr. Howard, and one for Kitty.

"I beg you, my dear, to write often to me, and tell me how you like my little book. I am, dear love, your affectionate humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

Montagu MSS. ["DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. MONTAGU.

"Gray's-inn, 17th Dec. 1759.

"MADAM,—Goodness so conspicuous as yours will be often solicited, and perhaps sometimes solicited by those who have little pretension to your favour. It is now my turn to introduce a petitioner, but such as I have reason to believe you will think worthy of your notice. Mrs. Ogle, who kept the musick-room in Soho-square, a woman who struggles with great industry for the support of eight children, hopes by a benefit concert to set herself free from a few debts, which she cannot otherwise discharge. She has, I know not why, so high an opinion of me as to believe that you will pay less regard to her application than to mine. You know, madam, I am sure you know, who hard it is to deny, and therefore would not wonder at my compliance, though I were to suppress a motive which you know not, the vanity of being supposed to be of any importance to Mrs. Montagu. But though I may be willing to see the world deceived for my advantage, I am not deceived myself, for I know that Mrs. Ogle will owe whatever favours she shall receive from the patronage which we humbly entreat on this occasion, much more to your compassion for honesty in distress, than to the request of, madam, your most obedient and most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

In 1760 he wrote "an Address of the Painters to George III. on his Accession to the Throne of these Kingdoms†," which no monarch ever ascended with more sincere congratulations from his people. Two

generations of foreign princes had prepared their minds to rejoice in having again a king, who gloried in being "born a Briton." He also wrote for Mr. Baretti the Dedication † of his Italian and English Dictionary, to the Marquis of Abreu, then envoy-extraordinary from Spain at the court of Great Britain.

Johnson was now either very idle, or very busy with his Shakspeare; for I can find no other publick composition by him except an Introduction to the proceedings of the Committee for clothing the French Prisoners*; one of the many proofs that he was ever awake to the calls of humanity; and an account which he gave in the Gentleman's Magazine of Mr. Tytler's acute and able vindication of Mary, Queen of Scots*. The generosity of Johnson's feelings shines forth in the following sentence[1]: "It has now been fashionable, for near half a century, to defame and vilify the house of Stuart, and to exalt and magnify the reign of Elizabeth. The Stuarts have found few apologists, for the dead cannot pay for praise; and who will, without reward, oppose the tide of popularity? Yet there remains still among us, not wholly extinguished, a zeal for truth, a desire of establishing right in opposition to fashion."

[The following memorandum, made on his birth-day in this year, may be quoted as an example of the rules and resolutions which he was in the habit of making, for the guidance of his moral conduct and literary studies: the fourth item seems obscure and strange: ED.

"Sept. 18. Prayers & Med. p. 41.

"Resolved, D. (*eo*) j (*uvante*),
"To combat notions of obligation.
"To apply to study.

[1] [This sentence may be generous, but it is not very logical. Elizabeth was surely as dead as the Stuarts, and could no more *pay for praise* than they could. —ED.]

Prayers & Med. p. 41.

" To reclaim imaginations.
" To consult the resolves on Tetty's coffin.
" To rise early.
" To study religion.
" To go to church.
" To drink less strong liquors.
" To keep a journal.
" To oppose laziness, by doing what is to be done to-morrow.
" Rise as early as I can.
" Send for books for Hist. of War.
" Put books in order.
" Scheme of life."]

In this year I have not discovered a single private letter written by him to any of his friends. It should seem that he had at this period a floating intention of writing a history of the recent and wonderful successes of the British arms in all quarters of the globe; for among the [foregoing] resolutions or memorandums, there is, "Send for books for Hist. of War." How much is it to be regretted that this intention was not fulfilled. His majestick expression would have carried down to the latest posterity the glorious achievements of his country, with the same fervent glow which they produced on the mind at the time. He would have been under no temptation to deviate in any degree from truth, which he held very sacred, or to take a licence, which a learned divine told me he once seemed, in a conversation, jocularly to allow to historians, "There are (said he) inexcusable lies, and consecrated lies. For instance, we are told that on the arrival of the news of the unfortunate battle of Fontenoy, every heart beat, and every eye was in tears. Now we know that no man eat his dinner the worse, but there *should* have been all this concern; and to say there *was* (smiling), may be reckoned a consecrated lie."

This year Mr. Murphy, having thought himself

ill-treated by the Reverend Dr. Franklin, who was one of the writers of "The Critical Review," published an indignant vindication in "A Poetical Epistle to Samuel Johnson, A. M.[1]" in which he compliments Johnson in a just and elegant manner:

"Transcendent Genius! whose prolifick vein
Ne'er knew the frigid poet's toil and pain;
To whom APOLLO opens all his store,
And every Muse presents her sacred lore;
Say, pow'rful JOHNSON, whence thy verse is fraught
With so much grace, such energy of thought;
Whether thy JUVENAL instructs the age
In chaster numbers, and new points his rage;
Or fair IRENE sees, alas! too late
Her innocence exchanged for guilty state;
Whate'er you write, in every golden line
Sublimity and elegance combine;
Thy nervous phrase impresses every soul,
While harmony gives rapture to the whole."

Again, towards the conclusion:

"Thou then, my friend, who see'st the dang'rous strife
In which some demon bids me plunge my life,
To the Aonian fount direct my feet,
Say, where the Nine thy lonely musings meet?
Where warbles to thy ear the sacred throng,
Thy moral sense, thy dignity of song?
Tell, for you can, by what unerring art
You wake to finer feelings every heart;
In each bright page some truth important give,
And bid to future times thy RAMBLER live."

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[1] [It seems strange and very uncandid that Mr. Murphy did not acknowledge that this poetical epistle was an imitation of Boileau's *Epître à Molicre*. I subjoin a few couplets from both Boileau and Murphy, which will show how little the epistle of the latter is entitled to the character of originality—in fact, such an *unacknowledged* use of an author is almost plagiarism.

Rare et fameux esprit, dont la fertile veine
Ignore, en écrivant, le travail et la peine.

Transcendent genius! whose prolifick vein
Ne'er knew the frigid poet's toil and pain.

Souvent j'ai beau rêver du matin jusqu'au soir;
Quand je veux dire blanc, la quinteuse dit noir.

In feverish toil I pass the weary night,
And when I would say black, rhyme answers white.

Ou puisque, enfin, tes soins y seroient superflus,
Molière, enseigne moi l'art de ne rimer plus.

And since I ne'er can learn thy classic lore,
Instruct me, Johnson, how to write no more!—ED.]

I take this opportunity to relate the manner in which an acquaintance first commenced between Dr. Johnson and Mr. Murphy. During the publication of "The Gray's-inn Journal," a periodical paper which was successfully carried on by Mr. Murphy alone, when a very young man, he happened to be in the country with Mr. Foote; and having mentioned that he was obliged to go to London in order to get ready for the press one of the numbers of that journal, Foote said to him, "You need not go on that account. Here is a French magazine, in which you will find a very pretty oriental tale; translate that, and send it to your printer." Mr. Murphy having read the tale, was highly pleased with it, and followed Foote's advice. When he returned to town, this tale was pointed out to him in "The Rambler," from whence it had been translated into the French magazine. Mr. Murphy then waited upon Johnson, to explain this curious incident. His talents, literature, and gentleman-like manners, were soon perceived by Johnson, and a friendship was formed, which was never broken[1].

[1] When Mr. Murphy first became acquainted with Dr. Johnson, he was about thirty-one years old. He died at Knightsbridge, June 18, 1805, it is believed in his eighty-second year.

In an account of this gentleman, published recently after his death, he is reported to have said, that "he was but *twenty-one*, when he had the impudence to write a periodical paper, during the time that Johnson was publishing "the Rambler."—In a subsequent page, in which Mr. Boswell gives an account of his first introduction to Johnson, will be found a striking instance of the incorrectness of Mr. Murphy's memory; and the assertion above-mentioned, if indeed he made it, which is by no means improbable, furnishes an additional proof of his inaccuracy; for both the facts asserted are unfounded. He appears to have been eight years older than twenty-one, when he began the Gray's-Inn Journal; and that paper, instead of running a race with Johnson's production, did not appear till after the closing of the Rambler, which ended March 14, 1752. The first number of the Gray's-Inn Journal made its appearance about seven months afterwards, in a newspaper of the time, called the Craftsman, October 21, 1752; and in that form the first forty-nine numbers were given to the publick. On Saturday, Sept. 29, 1753, it assumed a new form, and was published as a distinct periodical paper; and in that shape it continued to be published till the 21st of Sept. 1754, when it finally closed; forming in the whole one hundred and one Essays, in the folio copy. The extraordinary paper mentioned in the text is No. 38 of the second series, published on June 15, 1754; which is a re-translation from the French version of Johnson's Rambler,

"TO BENNET LANGTON, ESQ. AT LANGTON.

"18th Oct. 1760.

"DEAR SIR,—You that travel about the world have more materials for letters than I who stay at home; and should, therefore, write with frequency equal to your opportunities. I should be glad to have all England surveyed by you, if you would impart your observations in narratives as agreeable as your last. Knowledge is always to be wished to those who can communicate it well. While you have been riding and running, and seeing the tombs of the learned, and the camps of the valiant, I have only staid at home, and intended to do great things, which I have not done. Beau[1] went away to Cheshire, and has not yet found his way back. Chambers passed the vacation at Oxford.

"I am very sincerely solicitous for the preservation or curing of Mr. Langton's sight, and am glad that the chirurgeon at Coventry gives him so much hope. Mr. Sharpe is of opinion that the tedious maturation of the cataract is a vulgar errour[2], and that it may be removed as soon as it is formed. This notion deserves to be considered; I doubt whether it be universally true; but if it be true in some cases, and those cases can be distinguished, it may save a long and uncomfortable delay.

"Of dear Mrs. Langton you give me no account; which is the less friendly, as you know how highly I think of her, and how much I interest myself in her health. I suppose you told

No. 190. It was omitted in the re-publication of these Essays in two volumes, 12mo. in which one hundred and four are found, and in which the papers are not always dated on the days when they really appeared; so that the motto prefixed to this Anglo-Gallick Eastern tale, *obscuris vera involvens*, might very properly have been prefixed to this work, when re-published. Mr. Murphy did not, I believe, wait on Johnson recently after the publication of this adumbration of one of his Ramblers, as seems to be stated in the text; for, in his concluding Essay, Sept. 21, 1754, we find the following paragraph:

"Besides, why may not a person rather choose an air of bold negligence, than the obscure diligence of pedants and writers of affected phraseology? For my part, I have always thought an easy style more eligible than a pompous diction, lifted up by metaphor, amplified by epithet, and dignified by too frequent insertions of the Latin idiom." It is probable that the Rambler was here intended to be censured, and that the author, when he wrote it, was not acquainted with Johnson, whom, from his first introduction, he endeavoured to conciliate. Their acquaintance, therefore, it may be presumed, did not commence till towards the end of this year 1754. Murphy, however, had highly praised Johnson in the preceding year, No. 14 of the second series, Dec. 22, 1753.—MALONE. [It seems uncandid in Mr. Malone to insinuate a charge of falsehood against Mr. Murphy on the *hearsay* of an anonymous writer. Mr. Murphy, who in 1786 republished the *Gray's-inn Journal*, with the original date of the first number, 21st Oct. 1752, never *could* have said that it was contemporaneous with the *Rambler*.—ED.]

[1] Mr. Beauclerk.—BOSWELL.

[2] [Mr. Sharpe seems to have once been of a different opinion on this point. See *ante*, p. 221.—ED.]

her of my opinion, and likewise suppose it was not followed; however, I still believe it to be right.

"Let me hear from you again, wherever you are, or whatever you are doing; whether you wander or sit still, plant trees or make *Rusticks*[1], play with your sisters or muse alone; and in return I will tell you the success of Sheridan, who at this instant is playing Cato, and has already played Richard twice. He had more company the second than the first night, and will make I believe a good figure in the whole, though his faults seem to be very many; some of natural deficience, and some of laborious affectation. He has, I think, no power of assuming either that dignity or elegance which some men, who have little of either in common life, can exhibit on the stage. His voice when strained is unpleasing, and when low is not always heard. He seems to think too much on the audience, and turns his face too often to the galleries.

"However, I wish him well; and among other reasons, because I like his wife[2].

"Make haste to write to, dear sir, your most affectionate servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

In 1761 Johnson appears to have done little. He was still, no doubt, proceeding in his edition of Shakspeare; but what advances he made in it cannot be ascertained. He certainly was at this time not active; for, in his scrupulous examination of himself on Easter eve, he laments, in his too rigorous mode of censuring his own conduct, that his life, since the communion of the preceding Easter, had been "dissipated and useless." He, however, contributed this year the Preface* to Rolt's Dictionary of Trade

Pr. and Med. p. 44.

[1] Essays with that title, written about this time by Mr. Langton, but not published.

[2] Mrs. Sheridan was authour of "Memoirs of Miss Sydney Biddulph," a novel of great merit, and of some other pieces.—BOSWELL. [Her last work is, perhaps, her best—Nourjahad, an eastern tale: in which a pure morality is inculcated, with a great deal of fancy and considerable force. No wonder that Dr. Johnson should have *liked* her! Dr. Parr, in a letter to Mr. Moore, published in his Life of R. B. Sheridan (vol. i. p. 11), thus mentions her: "I once or twice met his mother—she was *quite celestial!* both her virtues and her genius were highly esteemed." This amiable and accomplished woman died at Blois, in September, 1766, as Mr. Moore states, and as is proved by a letter of Mr. Sheridan's, deploring that event, dated in October, 1766; though the Biog. Dict., and other authorities, placed her death in 1767.—ED.]

and Commerce," in which he displays such a clear and comprehensive knowledge of the subject, as might lead the reader to think that its authour had devoted all his life to it. I asked him, whether he knew much of Rolt, and of his work. "Sir (said he), I never saw the man, and never read the book. The booksellers wanted a Preface to a Dictionary of Trade and Commerce. I knew very well what such a Dictionary should be, and I wrote a Preface accordingly." Rolt, who wrote a great deal for the booksellers, was, as Johnson told me, a singular character. Though not in the least acquainted with him, he used to say, "I am just come from Sam. Johnson." This was a sufficient specimen of his vanity and impudence. But he gave a more eminent proof of it in our sister kingdom, as Dr. Johnson informed me. When Akenside's "Pleasures of the Imagination" first came out, he did not put his name to the poem. Rolt went over to Dublin, published an edition of it, and put his own name to it. Upon the fame of this he lived for several months, being entertained at the best tables as "the ingenious Mr. Rolt[1]." His conversation, indeed, did not discover much of the fire of a poet; but it was recollected that both Addison and Thomson were equally dull till excited by wine. Akenside having been informed of this imposition, vindicated his right by publishing the poem with its real authour's name. Several instances of such literary fraud have been detected.

[1] I have had inquiry made in Ireland as to this story, but do not find it recollected there. I give it on the authority of Dr. Johnson, to which may be added, that of the "Biographical Dictionary," and "Biographia Dramatica;" in both of which it has stood many years. Mr. Malone observes, that the truth probably is, not that an edition was published with Rolt's name in the title-page, but, that the poem being then anonymous, Rolt acquiesced in its being attributed to him in conversation.—BOSWELL. [In the late edition of the Biographical Dictionary, the foregoing story is indeed noticed, but with an observation that it has been *completely refuted*. Richard Rolt died in March, 1770. —ED.]

The Reverend Dr. Campbell, of St. Andrew's, wrote "An Inquiry into the original of Moral Virtue," the manuscript of which he sent to Mr. Innes, a clergyman in England, who was his countryman and acquaintance. Innes published it with his own name to it; and before the imposition was discovered, obtained considerable promotion, as a reward of his merit[1]. The celebrated Dr. Hugh Blair, and his cousin Mr. George Ballantine, when students in divinity, wrote a poem, entitled "The Resurrection," copies of which were handed about in manuscript. They were at length very much surprised to see a pompous edition of it in folio, dedicated to the Princess Dowager of Wales, by a Dr. Douglas, as his own. Some years ago a little novel, entitled "The Man of Feeling," was assumed by Mr. Eccles, a young Irish clergyman, who was afterwards drowned near Bath[2]. He had been at the pains to transcribe the whole book, with blottings, interlineations, and corrections, that it might be shown to several people as an original. It was, in truth, the production of Mr. Henry Mackenzie, an attorney in the Exchequer at Edinburgh, who is the authour of several other ingenious pieces; but the belief with regard to Mr. Eccles became so general, that it was thought necessary for Messieurs Strahan and Cadell to publish an advertisement in the newspapers, contradicting the report, and mentioning that they purchased the copyright of Mr. Mackenzie. I can conceive this kind of fraud to be very easily practised with successful effrontery. The *filiation* of a literary performance is difficult of

[1] I have both the books. Innes was the clergyman who brought Psalmanazar to England, and was an accomplice in his extraordinary fiction.—BOSWELL.

[2] [Died, the Rev. Mr. Eccles, at Bath. In attempting to save a boy, whom he saw sinking in the Avon, he, together with the youth, were both drowned."—*Gent. Mag.* Aug. 15, 1777. And in the magazine for the next month are some verses on this event, with an epitaph, of which the first line is,

Beneath this stone the "*man of feeling*" lies.—ED.]

proof; seldom is there any witness present at its birth. A man, either in confidence or by improper means, obtains possession of a copy of it in manuscript, and boldly publishes it as his own. The true authour, in many cases, may not be able to make his title clear. Johnson, indeed, from the peculiar features of his literary offspring, might bid defiance to any attempt to appropriate them to others:

"But Shakspeare's magick could not copied be;
Within that circle none durst walk but he."

["DR. JOHNSON TO MISS LUCY PORTER. Pearson MSS.

"Inner Temple-lane, 13th Jan. 1761.

"DEAREST MADAM,—I ought to have begun the new year with repairing the omissions of the last, and to have told you sooner, what I can always tell you with truth, that I wish you long life and happiness, always increasing till it shall end at last in the happiness of Heaven.

"I hope, my dear, you are well; I am at present pretty much disordered by a cold and cough; I have just been blooded, and hope I shall be better.

"Pray give my love to Kitty. I should be glad to hear that she goes on well. I am, my dearest dear, your most affectionate servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

He this year lent his friendly assistance to correct and improve a pamphlet written by Mr. Gwyn, the architect, entitled "Thoughts on the Coronation of George III."*

Johnson had now for some years admitted Mr. Baretti to his intimacy; nor did their friendship cease upon their being separated by Baretti's revisiting his native country, as appears from Johnson's letters to him.

"TO MR JOSEPH BARETTI, AT MILAN[1].

"(London), 10th June, 1761.

"You reproach me very often with parsimony of writing;

[1] The originals of Dr. Johnson's three letters to Mr. Baretti, which are among the very best he ever wrote, were communicated to the proprietors of that instructive and elegant monthly miscellany, *The European Magazine*, in which they first appeared.—BOSWELL.

but you may discover by the extent of my paper, that I design to recompense rarity by length. A short letter to a distant friend is, in my opinion, an insult like that of a slight bow or cursory salutation; a proof of unwillingness to do much, even where there is a necessity of doing something. Yet it must be remembered, that he who continues the same course of life in the same place will have little to tell. One week and one year are very like one another. The silent changes made by time are not always perceived; and if they are not perceived, cannot be recounted. I have risen and lain down, talked and mused, while you have roved over a considerable part of Europe; yet I have not envied my Baretti any of his pleasures, though, perhaps, I have envied others his company: and I am glad to have other nations made acquainted with the character of the English, by a traveller who has so nicely inspected our manners, and so successfully studied our literature. I received your kind letter from Falmouth, in which you gave me notice of your departure for Lisbon; and another from Lisbon, in which you told me, that you were to leave Portugal in a few days. To either of these how could any answer be returned? I have had a third from Turin, complaining that I have not answered the former. Your English style still continues in its purity and vigour. With vigour your genius will supply it: but its purity must be continued by close attention. To use two languages familiarly, and without contaminating one by the other, is very difficult; and to use more than two, is hardly to be hoped. The praises which some have received for their multiplicity of languages may be sufficient to excite industry, but can hardly generate confidence.

"I know not whether I can heartily rejoice at the kind reception which you have found, or at the popularity to which you are exalted. I am willing that your merit should be distinguished; but cannot wish that your affections may be gained. I would have you happy wherever you are: yet I would have you wish to return to England. If ever you visit us again you will find the kindness of your friends undiminished. To tell you how many inquiries are made after you would be tedious, or if not tedious, would be vain; because you may be told in a very few words, that all who knew you wish you well; and that all that you embraced at your departure will caress you at your return: therefore do not let Italian academicians nor Italian ladies drive us from your thoughts. You may find among us what you will leave behind, soft smiles and easy sonnets. Yet I shall not wonder if all our invitations should be rejected: for

there is a pleasure in being considerable at home, which is not easily resisted.

"By conducting Mr. Southwell[1] to Venice, you fulfilled, I know, the original contract: yet I would wish you not wholly to lose him from your notice, but to recommend him to such acquaintance as may best secure him from suffering by his own follies, and to take such general care both of his safety and his interest as may come within your power. His relations will thank you for any such gratuitous attention: at least they will not blame you for any evil that may happen, whether they thank you or not for any good.

"You know that we have a new king and a new parliament. Of the new parliament Fitzherbert[2] is a member. We were so weary of our old king, that we are much pleased with his successor; of whom we are so much inclined to hope great things, that most of us begin already to believe them. The young man is hitherto blameless; but it would be unreasonable to expect much from the immaturity of juvenile years, and the ignorance of princely education. He has been long in the hands of the Scots, and has already favoured them more than the English will contentedly endure. But, perhaps, he scarcely knows whom he has distinguished, or whom he has disgusted.

"The artists have instituted a yearly exhibition of pictures and statues, in imitation, as I am told, of foreign academies. This year was the second exhibition. They please themselves much with the multitude of spectators, and imagine that the English school will rise in reputation. Reynolds is without a rival, and continues to add thousands to thousands, which he deserves, among other excellencies, by retaining his kindness for Baretti. This exhibition has filled the heads of the artists and lovers of art. Surely life, if it be not long, is tedious, since we are forced to call in the assistance of so many trifles to rid us of our time, of that time which never can return.

"I know my Baretti will not be satisfied with a letter in which I give him no account of myself: yet what account shall I give him? I have not, since the day of our separation, suffered or done any thing considerable. The only change in my way of life is, that I have frequented the theatre more than in former seasons. But I have gone thither only to escape from myself. We have had many new farces, and the comedy called 'The Jealous Wife,' which, though not written with much

[1] [Probably, the Hon. Thomas Arthur Southwell, afterwards second Viscount Southwell, who was born in 1742, and succeeded his father in 1780.—Ed.]

[2] For Derby. See *ante*, p. 51.

genius, was yet so well adapted to the stage, and so well exhibited by the actors, that it was crowded for near twenty nights. I am digressing from myself to the playhouse; but a barren plan must be filled with episodes. Of myself I have nothing to say, but that I have hitherto lived without the concurrence of my own judgment; yet I continue to flatter myself, that when you return, you will find me mended. I do not wonder that where the monastick life is permitted, every order finds votaries, and every monastery inhabitants. Men will submit to any rule, by which they may be exempted from the tyranny of caprice and of chance. They are glad to supply by external authority their own want of constancy and resolution, and court the government of others, when long experience has convinced them of their own inability to govern themselves. If I were to visit Italy, my curiosity would be more attracted by convents than by palaces; though I am afraid that I should find expectation in both places equally disappointed, and life in both places supported with impatience and quitted with reluctance. That it must be so soon quitted, is a powerful remedy against impatience; but what shall free us from reluctance? Those who have endeavoured to teach us to die well, have taught few to die willingly: yet I cannot but hope that a good life might end at last in a contented death.

"You see to what a train of thought I am drawn by the mention of myself. Let me now turn my attention upon you. I hope you take care to keep an exact journal, and to register all occurrences and observations; for your friends here expect such a book of travels as has not been often seen. You have given us good specimens in your letters from Lisbon. I wish you had staid longer in Spain, for no country is less known to the rest of Europe; but the quickness of your discernment must make amends for the celerity of your motions. He that knows which way to direct his view, sees much in a little time.

"Write to me very often, and I will not neglect to write to you; and I may perhaps, in time, get something to write: at least you will know by my letters, whatever else they may have or want, that I continue to be your most affectionate friend,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

ED. [The classification in the foregoing letter of the art of painting and the exhibition of its productions among the *trifles* with which mankind endeavour to get rid of time, will excite the surprise of some

readers; but] [of the beauties of painting, notwithstanding the many eulogiums on that art which, after the commencement of his friendship with Sir Joshua Reynolds, he inserted in his writings, he had not the least conception; and the notice of this defect led Sir J. Hawkins to mention the following fact. One evening, at the club, Hawkins came in with a small roll of prints, which, in the afternoon, he had picked up: they were landscapes of Perelle, and laying it down with his hat, Johnson's curiosity prompted him to take it up and unroll it: he viewed the prints severally with great attention, and asked Hawkins what sort of pleasure such things could afford him: he replied that, as representations of nature, containing an assemblage of such particulars as render rural scenes delightful, they presented to his mind the objects themselves, and that his imagination realised the prospect before him. Johnson said, that was more than *his* would do, for that in his whole life he was never capable of discerning the least resemblance of any kind between a picture and the subject it was intended to represent. Hawk. p. 318.

To the delights of music, he was equally insensible: neither voice nor instrument, nor the harmony of concordant sounds, had power over his affections, or even to engage his attention. Of music in general, he has been heard to say, "it excites in my mind no ideas, and hinders me from contemplating my own;" and of a fine singer, or instrumental performer, that "he had the merit of a Canary-bird." Not that his hearing was so defective as to account for this insensibility, but he laboured under the misfortune which he has noted in the life of Barretier, and is common to more persons than in this musical age are willing to confess it, of wanting that additional sense or

faculty which renders music grateful to the human ear.]

In 1762 he wrote for the Reverend Dr. Kennedy, Rector of Bradley in Derbyshire, in a strain of very courtly elegance, a Dedication to the King * of that gentleman's work, entitled "A complete System of Astronomical Chronology, unfolding the Scriptures." He had certainly looked at this work before it was printed; for the concluding paragraph is undoubtedly of his composition, of which let my readers judge:

"Thus have I endeavoured to free religion and history from the darkness of a disputed and uncertain chronology; from difficulties which have hitherto appeared insuperable, and darkness which no luminary of learning has hitherto been able to dissipate. I have established the truth of the Mosaical account, by evidence which no transcription can corrupt, no negligence can lose, and no interest can pervert. I have shown that the universe bears witness to the inspiration of its historian, by the revolution of its orbs and the succession of its seasons; *that the stars in their courses fight against* incredulity, that the works of God give hourly confirmation to the *law*, the *prophets*, and the *gospel*, of which *one day telleth another, and one night certifieth another;* and that the validity of the sacred writings never can be denied, while the moon shall increase and wane, and the sun shall know his going down."

He this year wrote also the Dedication † to the Earl of Middlesex of Mrs. Lennox's "Female Quixote," and the Preface to the "Catalogue of the Artists' Exhibition †."

The following letter, which, on account of its intrinsick merit, it would have been unjust both to Johnson and the publick to have withheld, was obtained for me by the solicitation of my friend Mr. Seward:

"TO DR. (NOW SIR GEORGE) STAUNTON[1].

"1st June, 1762.

"DEAR SIR,—I make haste to answer your kind letter, in

[1] George Leonard Staunton was born in Galway, in Ireland, in 1737, and

hope of hearing again from you before you leave us. I cannot but regret that a man of your qualifications should find it necessary to seek an establishment in Guadaloupe, which if a peace should restore to the French, I shall think it some alleviation of the loss, that it must restore likewise Dr. Staunton to the English.

"It is a melancholy consideration, that so much of our time is necessarily to be spent upon the care of living, and that we can seldom obtain ease in one respect but by resigning it in another: yet I suppose we are by this dispensation not less happy in the whole, than if the spontaneous bounty of Nature poured all that we want into our hands. A few, if they were left thus to themselves, would, perhaps, spend their time in laudable pursuits; but the greater part would prey upon the quiet of each other, or, in the want of other objects, would prey upon themselves.

"This, however, is our condition, which we must improve and solace as we can: and though we cannot choose always our place of residence, we may in every place find rational amusements, and possess in every place the comforts of piety and a pure conscience.

"In America there is little to be observed except natural curiosities. The new world must have many vegetables and animals with which philosophers are but little acquainted. I hope you will furnish yourself with some books of natural history, and some glasses and other instruments of observation. Trust as little as you can to report; examine all you can by your own senses. I do not doubt but you will be able to add much to knowledge, and, perhaps, to medicine. Wild nations

having adopted the profession of medicine, which he studied in France, he came to London in 1760, where he wrote for the periodical publications of the day, and formed an acquaintance with Dr. Johnson. In 1762 he went to the West Indies, where he practised as a physician for a short time, and by that and some civil offices, accumulated a competent fortune, which he invested in estates in the island of Granada. He returned to England in 1770; but, in 1772, again went to Granada, where he was appointed attorney-general, and made the valuable acquaintance of Lord Macartney, who became governor of that island in 1774. By the capture of Granada by the French in 1779, Lord Macartney lost his government, and Staunton his property. He returned to England with, it is supposed, little of the wreck of his fortune. He, however, had acquired Lord Macartney's friendship, and he accompanied his lordship to Madras in 1781; and for his distinguished services during his official residence there had a pension of 500*l.* per annum settled on him, in 1784, by the East India company, and was created a baronet. When Lord Macartney was selected for the celebrated embassy to China, Sir George was named to accompany him as secretary and minister plenipotentiary. His splendid account of that embassy is well known. He died in London, 14th January, 1801, and was buried in Westminster Abbey. —Ed.]

trust to simples; and, perhaps, the Peruvian bark is not the only specifick which those extensive regions may afford us.

"Wherever you are, and whatever be your fortune, be certain, dear sir, that you carry with you my kind wishes; and that whether you return hither or stay in the other hemisphere, to hear that you are happy will give pleasure to, sir, your most affectionate humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

A lady having at this time solicited him to obtain the Archbishop of Canterbury's patronage to have her son sent to the University, one of those solicitations which are too frequent, where people, anxious for a particular object, do not consider propriety, or the opportunity which the persons whom they solicit have to assist them, he wrote to her the following answer; with a copy of which I am favoured by the Reverend Dr. Farmer,* Master of Emanuel College, Cambridge.

"8th June, 1762.

"MADAM,—I hope you will believe that my delay in answering your letter could proceed only from my unwillingness to destroy any hope that you had formed. Hope is itself a species of happiness, and, perhaps, the chief happiness which this world affords: but like all other pleasures immoderately enjoyed, the excesses of hope must be expiated by pain; and expectations improperly indulged, must end in disappointment. If it be asked, what is the improper expectation which it is dangerous to indulge, experience will quickly answer, that it is such expectation as is dictated not by reason, but by desire; expectation raised, not by the common occurrences of life, but by the wants of the expectant; an expectation that requires the common course of things to be changed, and the general rules of action to be broken.

"When you made your request to me, you should have considered, madam, what you were asking. You ask me to solicit a great man, to whom I never spoke, for a young person whom I had never seen, upon a supposition which I had no means of knowing to be true. There is no reason why, amongst all the great, I should choose to supplicate the archbishop, nor why, among all the possible objects of his bounty, the archbishop should choose your son. I know, madam, how unwillingly con-

viction is admitted, when interest opposes it; but surely, madam, you must allow, that there is no reason why that should be done by me, which every other man may do with equal reason, and which, indeed, no man can do properly, without some very particular relation both to the archbishop and to you. If I could help you in this exigence by any proper means, it would give me pleasure; but this proposal is so very remote from usual methods, that I cannot comply with it, but at the risk of such answer and suspicions as I believe you do not wish me to undergo.

"I have seen your son this morning; he seems a pretty youth, and will, perhaps, find some better friend than I can procure him; but though he should at last miss the University, he may still be wise, useful, and happy. I am, madam, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MR. JOSEPH BARETTI, AT MILAN.

"London, 20th July, 1762.

"SIR,—However justly you may accuse me for want of punctuality in correspondence, I am not so far lost in negligence as to omit the opportunity of writing to you, which Mr. Beauclerk's passage through Milan affords me.

"I suppose you received the Idlers, and I intend that you shall soon receive Shakspeare, that you may explain his works to the ladies of Italy, and tell them the story of the editor, among the other strange narratives with which your long residence in this unknown region has supplied you.

"As you have now been long away, I suppose your curiosity may pant for some news of your old friends. Miss Williams and I live much as we did. Miss Cotterel still continues to cling to Mrs. Porter [1], and Charlotte is now big of the fourth child. Mr. Reynolds gets six thousands a year. Levet is lately married, not without much suspicion that he has been wretchedly cheated in his match. Mr. Chambers is gone this day, for the first time, the circuit with the judges. Mr. Richardson is dead of an apoplexy, and his second daughter [2] has married a merchant.

"My vanity, or my kindness, makes me flatter myself, that you would rather hear of me than of those whom I have mentioned; but of myself I have very little which I care to tell.

[1] [See *ante*, p. 227. *n.* Miss Charlotte Cotterel appears to have married the Rev. John Lewis, A. M., who became Dean of Ossory, in Ireland, in 1755. He died about 1782.—ED.]

[2] [Martha (his chief amanuensis) married Edward Bridgen, 24th April, 1762.—ED.]

Last winter I went down to my native town, where I found the streets much narrower and shorter than I thought I had left them, inhabited by a new race of people, to whom I was very little known[1]. My play-fellows were grown old, and forced me to suspect that I was no longer young. My only remaining friend[2] has changed his principles, and was become the tool of the predominant faction. My daughter-in-law, from whom I expected most, and whom I met with sincere benevolence, has lost the beauty and gaiety of youth, without having gained much of the wisdom of age. I wandered about for five days, and took the first convenient opportunity of returning to a place, where, if there is not much happiness, there is, at least, such a diversity of good and evil, that slight vexations do not fix upon the heart.

"I think in a few weeks to try another excursion; though to what end? Let me know, my Baretti, what has been the result of your return to your own country: whether time has made any alteration for the better, and whether, when the first raptures of salutation were over, you did not find your thoughts confessed their disappointment.

"Moral sentences appear ostentatious and tumid, when they have no greater occasions than the journey of a wit to his own town: yet such pleasures and such pains make up the general mass of life; and as nothing is little to him that feels it with great sensibility, a mind able to see common incidents in their real state is disposed by very common incidents to very serious contemplations. Let us trust that a time will come, when the present moment shall be no longer irksome; when we shall not borrow all our happiness from hope, which at last is to end in disappointment.

"I beg that you will show Mr. Beauclerk all the civilities which you have in your power; for he has always been kind to me.

"I have lately seen Mr. Stratico, Professor of Padua, who has told me of your quarrel with an Abbot of the Celestine order; but had not the particulars very ready in his memory. When you write to Mr. Marsili, let him know that I remember him with kindness.

"May you, my Baretti, be very happy at Milan, or some other place nearer to, sir, your most affectionate humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

[1] [All this supports the opinion that he had not visited Lichfield between 1737 and 1761.—ED.]

[2] [Probably Dr. Taylor of Ashbourn.—ED.]

The accession of George the Third to the throne of these kingdoms opened a new and brighter prospect to men of literary merit, who had been honoured with no mark of royal favour in the preceding reign. His present majesty's education in this country, as well as his taste and beneficence, prompted him to be the patron of science and the arts; and early this year Johnson having been represented to him as a very learned and good man, without any certain provision, his majesty was pleased to grant him a pension of three hundred pounds a year. The Earl of Bute, who was then prime minister, had the honour to announce this instance of his sovereign's bounty, concerning which, many and various stories, all equally erroneous, have been propagated; maliciously representing it as a political bribe to Johnson, to desert his avowed principles and become the tool of a government which he had held to be founded in usurpation. I have taken care to have it in my power to refute them from the most authentick information. Lord Bute told me, that Mr. Wedderburne, now Lord Loughborough, was the person who first mentioned this subject to him. Lord Loughborough told me, that the pension was granted to Johnson solely as the reward of his literary merit, without any stipulation whatever, or even tacit understanding that he should write for administration. His lordship added, that he was confident the political tracts which Johnson afterwards did write, as they were entirely consonant with his own opinions, would have been written by him, though no pension had been granted to him [1].

Mr. Thomas Sheridan and Mr. Murphy, who then lived a good deal both with him and Mr. Wedder-

[1] [This seems hardly consistent with some admitted facts. One, at least, of these pamphlets, *the Patriot*, was "called for" by his political friends (see *post*, letter to Mr. Boswell, 26th Nov 1774); and two of the others were (see *post*, letter to Langton, 20th March, 1771, and 21st March, 1775) submitted to the revision and correction of ministers.—ED.]

burne, told me, that they previously talked with Johnson upon this matter, and it was perfectly understood by all parties that the pension was merely honorary. Sir Joshua Reynolds told me, that Johnson called on him after his majesty's intention had been notified to him, and said he wished to consult his friends as to the propriety of his accepting this mark of the royal favour, after the definitions which he had given in his Dictionary of *pension* and *pensioners*. He said he should not have Sir Joshua's answer till next day, when he would call again, and desired he might think of it. Sir Joshua answered that he was clear to give his opinion then, that there could be no objection to his receiving from the king a reward for literary merit; and that certainly the definitions in his Dictionary were not applicable to him. Johnson, it should seem, was satisfied, for he did not call again till he had accepted the pension, and had waited on Lord Bute to thank him. He then told Sir Joshua that Lord Bute said to him expressly, "It is not given you for any thing you are to do, but for what you have done[1]." His lordship, he said, behaved in the handsomest manner. He repeated the words twice, that he might be sure Johnson heard them, and thus set his mind perfectly at ease. This nobleman, who has been so virulently abused, acted with great honour in this instance, and displayed a mind truly liberal. A minister of a more narrow and selfish disposition would have availed himself of such an opportunity to fix an implied obligation on a man of Johnson's powerful talents to give him his support[2].

[1] This was said by Lord Bute, as Dr. Burney was informed by Johnson himself, in answer to a question which he put, previously to his acceptance of the intended bounty: "Pray, my lord, what am I expected to do for this pension?"—MALONE.

[2] [Such favours are never conferred under *express* conditions of future servility—the phrases used on this occasion have been employed in all similar cases, and

Mr. Murphy[1] and the late Mr. Sheridan severally contended for the distinction of having been the first who mentioned to Mr. Wedderburne that Johnson ought to have a pension. When I spoke of this to Lord Loughborough, wishing to know if he recollected the prime mover in the business, he said, "All his friends assisted:" and when I told him that Mr. Sheridan strenuously asserted his claim to it, his lordship said, "He rang the bell." And it is but just to add, that Mr. Sheridan told me, that when he communicated to Dr. Johnson that a pension was to be granted him, he replied in a fervour of gratitude, "The English language does not afford me terms adequate to my feelings on this occasion. I must have recourse to the French. I am *penetré* with his majesty's goodness." When I repeated this to Dr. Johnson, he did not contradict it.

[Mr. Murphy relates, that Lord Loughborough, who, perhaps, was originally a mover in the business, had authority to mention it. He was well acquainted with Johnson; but, having heard much of his independent spirit, and of the downfall of Osborne, the bookseller, he did not know but his benevolence might be rewarded with a folio on his head. He desired the author of these memoirs to undertake the task. This writer thought the opportunity of doing so much good the most happy incident in his life. He went, without delay, to the chambers in the Inner Temple-lane, which, in fact, were the abode of wretchedness. By slow and studied approaches the message was dis- Murph. Essay, p. 92.

they are here insisted on by Mr. Boswell to cover or extenuate the inconsistency of Johnson's conduct with his unlucky definitions of *pension* and *pensioner*.—Ed.]

[1] [This is not correct. Mr. Murphy did not "contest *this* distinction" with Mr. Sheridan. He claimed, we see, not the first suggestion *to* Lord Loughborough, but the first notice *from* his lordship to Johnson. It is to be feared, that Mr. Boswell's misrepresentation was prompted by his anxiety to diminish the importance of Sheridan's services, which Johnson himself so ungratefully requited. See *post*, p. 395, &c.—Ed.]

Murph. Essay, p. 92. closed. Johnson made a long pause: he asked if it was seriously intended? He fell into a profound meditation, and his own definition of a pensioner occurred to him. He was told, "that he, at least, did not come within the definition." He desired to meet next day, and dine at the Mitre tavern. At that meeting he gave up all his scruples. On the following day Lord Loughborough conducted him to the Earl of Bute.]

His definitions of *pension* and *pensioner*, partly founded on the satirical verses of Pope, which he quotes, may be generally true; and yet every body must allow, that there may be, and have been, instances of pensions given and received upon liberal and honourable terms. Thus, then, it is clear, that there was nothing inconsistent or humiliating in Johnson's accepting of a pension so unconditionally and so honourably offered to him.

But I shall not detain my readers longer by any words of my own, on a subject on which I am happily enabled, by the favour of the Earl of Bute, to present them with what Johnson himself wrote; his lordship having been pleased to communicate to me a copy of the following letter to his late father, which does great honour both to the writer, and to the noble person to whom it is addressed:

"TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL OF BUTE.

"20th July, 1762.

"My lord,—When the bills[1] were yesterday delivered to me by Mr. Wedderburne, I was informed by him of the future favours which his majesty has, by your lordship's recommendation, been induced to intend for me.

"Bounty always receives part of its value from the manner

[1] [It does not appear what *bills* these were; evidently something distinct from the pension, yet probably of the same nature, as the words "*future* favours" seem to imply that there had been some *present* favour.—Ed.]

in which it is bestowed; your lordship's kindness includes every circumstance that can gratify delicacy, or enforce obligation. You have conferred your favours on a man who has neither alliance nor interest [1], who has not merited them by services, nor courted them by officiousness; you have spared him the shame of solicitation, and the anxiety of suspense.

"What has been thus elegantly given, will, I hope, not be reproachfully enjoyed; I shall endeavour to give your lordship the only recompense which generosity desires—the gratification of finding that your benefits are not improperly bestowed. I am, my lord, your lordship's most obliged, most obedient, and most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

[The addition of three hundred pounds a year, to what Johnson was able to earn by the ordinary exercise of his talents, raised him to a state of comparative affluence, and afforded him the means of assisting many whose real or pretended wants had formerly excited his compassion. He now practised a rule which he often recommended to his friends, always to carry some loose money to give to beggars, imitating therein, though certainly without intending it, that good but weak man, old Mr. Whiston, who has been seen distributing, in the streets, money to beggars on each hand of him, till his pocket was nearly exhausted.] Hawk. p. 395.

[When he was in the habit of visiting Lichfield, towards the latter part of his life, he was accustomed, on his arrival, to deposit with Miss Porter as much cash as would pay his expenses back to London. He could not trust himself with his own money, as he felt himself unable to resist the importunity of the numerous claimants on his benevolence.] Harwood.

[Severity towards the poor was, in Dr. Johnson's opinion (as is visible in his Life of Addison particularly), an undoubted and constant attendant or conse- Piozzi, p. 64,65.

[1] [These are the phrases by which a man endeavours to deceive himself and the world. Johnson would dignify himself by attributing his pension to the spontaneous patronage of Lord Bute, passing over in silence Sheridan and Mr. Wedderburne, whose *solicitation* and *interest* undoubtedly led to the grant of the pension.—ED.]

Piozzi, p.64, 65.

quence upon whiggism[1]; and he was not contented with giving them relief, he wished to add also indulgence. He loved the poor, says Mrs. Piozzi, as I never yet saw any one else do, with an earnest desire to make them happy. What signifies, says some one, giving halfpence to common beggars? they only lay it out in gin or tobacco. "And why should they be denied such sweeteners of their existence (says Johnson)? it is surely very savage to refuse them every possible avenue to pleasure, reckoned too coarse for our own acceptance. Life is a pill which none of us can bear to swallow without gilding; yet for the poor we delight in stripping it still barer, and are not ashamed to show even visible displeasure, if ever the bitter taste is taken from their mouths." In pursuance of these principles he nursed whole nests of people in his house, where the lame, the blind, the sick, and the sorrowful, found a sure retreat from all the evils whence his little income could secure them: and at the time when he commonly spent the middle of the week at Streatham, he kept his numerous family in Fleet-street upon a settled allowance; but returned to them every Saturday, to give them three good dinners, and his company, before he came back to Mr. Thrale's on the Monday night—treating them with the same, or perhaps more ceremonious civility, than he would have done by as many people of fashion.]

This year, his friend, Sir Joshua Reynolds, paid a visit of some weeks to his native country, Devonshire, in which he was accompanied by Johnson, who was much pleased with this jaunt, and declared he had derived from it a great accession of new ideas. He

[1] [That Johnson may, in conversation, have made this strange and almost unintelligible charge against the whigs is possible; but if by the allusion to the *Life of Addison* is meant the observation on the character of Sir Andrew Freeport, Mrs. Piozzi has misrepresented the matter. It is "the spirit of unfeeling *commerce*," and not of *whiggism*, that Johnson observes upon.—Ed.]

was entertained at the seats of several noblemen and gentlemen in the west of England; but the greatest part of this time was passed at Plymouth, where the magnificence of the navy, the ship-building and all its circumstances, afforded him a grand subject of contemplation. At one of these seats Dr. Amyat, physician in London, told me he happened to meet him. In order to amuse him till dinner should be ready, he was taken out to walk in the garden. The master of the house thinking it proper to introduce something scientifick into the conversation, addressed him thus: "Are you a botanist, Dr. Johnson?" "No, sir," answered Johnson, "I am not a botanist; and (alluding, no doubt, to his near-sightedness), should I wish to become a botanist, I must first turn myself into a reptile." The commissioner[1] of the dock-yard paid him the compliment of ordering the yacht to convey him and his friend to the Eddystone, to which they accordingly sailed. But the weather was so tempestuous that they could not land.

Reynolds and he were at this time the guests of Dr. Mudge, the celebrated surgeon, and now physician of that place, not more distinguished for quickness of parts and variety of knowledge, than loved and esteemed for his amiable manners; and here Johnson formed an acquaintance with Dr. Mudge's father[2], that very eminent divine, the Rev. Zachariah Mudge, prebendary of Exeter, who was idolised in the west, both for his excellence as a preacher and the uniform perfect propriety of his private conduct. He preached a sermon purposely that Johnson might hear him; and we shall see afterwards that Johnson honoured his

[1] [Captain Francis Rogers.—ED.]

[2] [Mr. Thomas Mudge, the ingenious watchmaker in Fleet-street, who made considerable improvements in time-keepers, and wrote a book on that subject, was another son of Mr. Zachariah Mudge.—HALL.]

memory by drawing his character. While Johnson was at Plymouth, he saw a great many of its inhabitants, and was not sparing of his very entertaining conversation. It was here that he made that frank and truly original confession, that "ignorance, pure ignorance," was the cause of a wrong definition in his Dictionary of the word *pastern* [*the knee of a horse*], to the no small surprise of the lady who put the question to him; who having the most profound reverence for his character, so as almost to suppose him endowed with infallibility, expected to hear an explanation (of what, to be sure, seemed strange to a common reader), drawn from some deep-learned source with which she was unacquainted.

Sir Joshua Reynolds, to whom I was obliged for my information concerning this excursion, mentions a very characteristical anecdote of Johnson while at Plymouth. Having observed, that in consequence of the dock-yard a new town had arisen about two miles off as a rival to the old; and knowing from his sagacity, and just observation of human nature, that it is certain if a man hates at all, he will hate his next neighbour; he concluded that this new and rising town could not but excite the envy and jealousy of the old, in which conjecture he was very soon confirmed; he therefore set himself resolutely on the side of the old town, the *established* town, in which his lot was cast, considering it as a kind of duty to *stand by* it. He accordingly entered warmly into his interests, and upon every occasion talked of the *Dockers*, as the inhabitants of the new town were called, as upstarts and aliens. Plymouth is very plentifully supplied with water by a river brought into it from a great distance, which is so abundant that it runs to waste in the town. The Dock, or Newtown, being totally destitute of water, petitioned Plymouth that a small por-

tion of the conduit might be permitted to go to them, and this was now under consideration. Johnson, affecting to entertain the passions of the place, was violent in opposition; and half-laughing at himself for his pretended zeal, where he had no concern, exclaimed, "No, no! I am against the *Dockers*[1]; I am a Plymouth man. Rogues! let them die of thirst. They shall not have a drop!"

Lord Macartney obligingly favoured me with a copy of the following letter, in his own handwriting, from the original, which was found, by the present Earl of Bute, among his father's papers.

"TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL OF BUTE.

"Temple-lane, 3d Nov. 1762.

"MY LORD,—That generosity by which I was recommended to the favour of his majesty will not be offended at a solicitation necessary to make that favour permanent and effectual.

"The pension appointed to be paid me at Michaelmas I have not received, and know not where or from whom I am to ask it. I beg, therefore, that your lordship will be pleased to supply Mr. Wedderburne with such directions as may be necessary, which, I believe, his friendship will make him think it no trouble to convey to me.

"To interrupt your lordship, at a time like this, with such petty difficulties, is improper and unseasonable; but your knowledge of the world has long since taught you, that every man's affairs, however little, are important to himself. Every man hopes that he shall escape neglect; and, with reason, may every man, whose vices do not preclude his claim, expect favour from that beneficence which has been extended to, my lord, your lordship's most obliged, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

[1] A friend of mine once heard him, during this visit, exclaim with the utmost vehemence, "I HATE a Docker."—BLAKEWAY. [This feud happily subsided, but the *Dockers* continued to our own days dissatisfied with being considered as a mere appendage to *Plymouth*; and they solicited and obtained, in 1823, the king's royal licence that the town of *Plymouth-dock* should be hereafter called *Devonport*—a name singularly ill-chosen on the part of the *Dockers*—for it happens, ludicrously enough, that the *port* of *Plymouth* is wholly within the county of Devon; while Hamoaze, the port of Dock, is equally in Devon and *Cornwall*. So that the *Dockers* have assumed a name which could properly belong only to the antagonist town; and, to crown the blunder, the *separate* name was given just when the increase of buildings had completed the *union* of the two towns.—ED.]

"TO MR. JOSEPH BARETTI, AT MILAN.

"London, 21 Dec. 1762.

"SIR,—You are not to suppose, with all your conviction of my idleness, that I have passed all this time without writing to my Baretti. I gave a letter to Mr. Beauclerk, who, in my opinion, and in his own, was hastening to Naples for the recovery of his health; but he has stopped at Paris, and I know not when he will proceed. Langton is with him.

"I will not trouble you with speculations about peace and war. The good or ill success of battles and embassies extends itself to a very small part of domestick life: we all have good and evil, which we feel more sensibly than our petty part of publick miscarriage or prosperity. I am sorry for your disappointment, with which you seem more touched than I should expect a man of your resolution and experience to have been, did I not know that general truths are seldom applied to particular occasions; and that the fallacy of our self-love extends itself as wide as our interest or affections. Every man believes that mistresses are unfaithful, and patrons capricious; but he excepts his own mistress, and his own patron. We have all learned that greatness is negligent and contemptuous, and that in courts life is often languished away in ungratified expectation; but he that approaches greatness, or glitters in a court, imagines that destiny has at last exempted him from the common lot.

"Do not let such evils overwhelm you as thousands have suffered, and thousands have surmounted; but turn your thoughts with vigour to some other plan of life, and keep always in your mind, that, with due submission to Providence, a man of genius has been seldom ruined but by himself. Your patron's weakness or insensibility will finally do you little hurt, if he is not assisted by your own passions. Of your love I know not the propriety, nor can estimate the power; but in love, as in every other passion of which hope is the essence, we ought always to remember the uncertainty of events. There is, indeed, nothing that so much seduces reason from vigilance, as the thought of passing life with an amiable woman; and if all would happen that a lover fancies, I know not what other terrestrial happiness would deserve pursuit. But love and marriage are different states. Those who are to suffer the evils together[1], and to suffer often for the sake of one another, soon lose that tenderness of look, and that benevolence of mind,

[1] Johnson probably wrote "the evils *of life* together." The words in italicks, however, are not found in Baretti's original edition of this letter, but they may have been omitted inadvertently either in his transcript or at the press.—MALONE.

which arose from the participation of unmingled pleasure and successive amusement. A woman, we are sure, will not be always fair; we are not sure she will always be virtuous: and man cannot retain through life that respect and assiduity by which he pleases for a day or for a month. I do not, however, pretend to have discovered that life has any thing more to be desired than a prudent and virtuous marriage; therefore know not what counsel to give you.

"If you can quit your imagination of love and greatness, and leave your hopes of preferment and bridal raptures to try once more the fortune of literature and industry, the way through France is now open. We flatter ourselves that we shall cultivate, with great diligence, the arts of peace; and every man will be welcome among us who can teach us any thing we do not know. For your part, you will find all your old friends willing to receive you.

"Reynolds still continues to increase in reputation and in riches. Miss Williams, who very much loves you, goes on in the old way. Miss Cotterel is still with Mrs. Porter. Miss Charlotte is married to Dean Lewis, and has three children. Mr. Levet has married a street-walker. But the gazette of my narration must now arrive to tell you, that Bathurst went physician to the army, and died at the Havannah.

"I know not whether I have not sent you word that Huggins [1]

[1] [Huggins, the translator of Ariosto. His enmity to Baretti and Johnson will be explained by the following extract from a MS. letter of Dr. Warton to his brother, dated Winslade, 28th April, 1755.

"He (Huggins) abuses Baretti infernally, and says that he *run* off with a *gold* watch (you remember the *present*); that he one day lent Barretti the watch to know when to return from a walk to dinner, and could never get it afterwards; that he applied to him in London; that after many excuses Baretti skulked, and then got *Johnson* to write to Mr. Huggins a suppliant letter; that this letter stopped Huggins awhile, while Baretti got a *protection* from the Sardinian ambassador; that *then* Johnson had the assurance to write him, Huggins, a *sneering* letter, defying his power to touch Baretti; that then Huggins applied to Sir Thomas Robinson, secretary of state, to get the ambassador to revoke his protection, which he did; and that, at last, with great difficulty, the watch was got from a pawnbroker's, to whom Baretti had sold it.

"What a strange story, and how difficult to be believed, especially considering who it comes from! Huggins wanted to get an approbation of his translation from Johnson; but Johnson would not, though Huggins says 't was only to get money from him. To crown all, he says that Baretti wanted to poison Croker. This makes the whole improbable, but crowns the story. Are not these rich anecdotes? I told Jones, and commissioned him to tell St. John the whole truth. Dr. Brown, ———'s neighbour, got Ariosto for Queen's. By some means or other, Johnson must know this story of Huggins. How infamous is it, if it should be false!" Baretti had been employed by Huggins to revise his translation.

The person whom Huggins accused Baretti of an attempt to poison was the Rev. Temple Henry Croker, the author of several works, and amongst others of a translation of Ariosto's *Orlando*, published in 1755, and of his *Satires*, in 1759.—ED.]

and Richardson are both dead. When we see our enemies and friends gliding away before us, let us not forget that we are subject to the general law of mortality, and shall soon be where our doom will be fixed for ever.—I pray God to bless you, and am, sir, your most affectionate humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON.

"Write soon."

In 1763 he furnished to "The Poetical Calendar," published by Fawkes and Woty, a character of Collins*, which he afterwards engrafted into his entire life of that admirable poet, in the collection of lives which he wrote for the body of English poetry, formed and published by the booksellers of London. His account of the melancholy depression with which Collins was severely afflicted, and which brought him to his grave, is, I think, one of the most tender and interesting passages in the whole series of his writings[1]. He also favoured Mr. Hoole with the Dedication of his translations of Tasso to the Queen*, which is so happily conceived and elegantly expressed, that I cannot but point it out to the peculiar notice of my readers[2].

Pearson MSS.

["TO MRS. LUCY PORTER, IN LICHFIELD.

"12th April, 1763.

"MY DEAR,—The newspaper has informed me of the death of Captain Porter. I know not what to say to you, condolent

[1] [We have seen *ante*, p. 264, the peculiar sympathy which probably gave such pathos to Johnson's account of the mental infirmities of Collins.—ED.]

[2] "MADAM,—To approach the high and illustrious has been in all ages the privilege of poets; and though translators cannot justly claim the same honour, yet they naturally follow their authours as attendants; and I hope that in return for having enabled Tasso to diffuse his fame through the British dominions, I may be introduced by him to the presence of your majesty.

"Tasso has a peculiar claim to your majesty's favour, as follower and panegyrist of the house of Este, which has one common ancestor with the house of Hanover; and in reviewing his life, it is not easy to forbear a wish that he had lived in a happier time, when he might among the descendants of that illustrious family have found a more liberal and potent patronage.

"I cannot but observe, madam, how unequally reward is proportioned to merit, when I reflect that the happiness which was withheld from Tasso is reserved for me; and that the poem which once hardly procured to its authour the countenance of the princes of Ferrara, has attracted to its translator the favourable notice of a British queen.

"Had this been the fate of Tasso, he would have been able to have celebrated the condescension of your majesty in nobler language, but could not have felt it with more ardent gratitude than, madam, your majesty's most faithful and devoted servant."—BOSWELL.

or consolatory, beyond the common considerations which I suppose you have proposed to others, and know how to apply to yourself. In all afflictions the first relief is to be asked of God.

"I wish to be informed in what condition your brother's death has left your fortune; if he has bequeathed you competence or plenty, I shall sincerely rejoice; if you are in any distress or difficulty, I will endeavour to make what I have, or what I can get, sufficient for us both.—I am, madam, yours affectionately, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

I shall now present my readers with some *Collectanea*[1], obligingly furnished to me by the Rev. Dr. Maxwell, of Falkland, in Ireland[2], some time assistant preacher at the Temple, and for many years the social friend of Johnson, who spoke of him with a very kind regard. Maxwell

"My acquaintance with that great and venerable character commenced in the year 1754. I was introduced to him by Mr. Grierson[3], his majesty's printer at Dublin, a gentleman of uncommon learning, and great wit and vivacity. Mr. Grierson died in Germany, at the age of twenty-seven. Dr. Johnson highly respected his abilities, and often observed,

[1] [Mr. Boswell had inserted these *Collectanea* under 1770, to supply the blank occasioned by his not having visited London that year; but as many of Dr. Maxwell's anecdotes appear to relate to a period antecedent to the commencement of Mr. Boswell's personal acquaintance in 1763, it has been thought better to remove them to this place.—ED.]

[2] [Dr. William Maxwell was the son of Dr. John Maxwell, Archdeacon of Downe, in Ireland, and cousin of the Honourable Henry Maxwell, Bishop of Dromore in 1765, and of Meath in 1766, from whom he obtained preferment; but having a considerable property of his own, he resigned the living when, as it is said, his residence was insisted on; and he fixed himself in Bath, where he died so late as 1818, at the age of 87. Although, as has been just stated, most of the anecdotes probably refer to the period when Johnson resided in the Temple, Maxwell must have kept up occasional intercourse with him, as some of them undoubtedly refer to a later time. Dr. Maxwell was very proud of his acquaintance with Johnson, and affected to imitate his style of conversation. —ED.]

[3] Son of the learned Mrs. Grierson, who was patronized by the late Lord Granville, and was the editor of several of the classicks.—BOSWELL. Her edition of Tacitus, with the notes of Ryckius, in three volumes, 8vo. 1730, was dedicated in very elegant Latin [from her own pen] to John, Lord Carteret (afterwards Earl Granville), by whom she was patronized during his residence in Ireland as lord-lieutenant between 1724 and 1730.—MALONE. [Lord Carteret gave her family the lucrative patent office of king's printer in Ireland, still enjoyed by her descendants. She was very beautiful, as well as learned.—ED.]

Maxwell that he possessed more extensive knowledge than any man of his years he had ever known. His industry was equal to his talents; and he particularly excelled in every species of philological learning, and was, perhaps, the best critick of the age he lived in.

"I must always remember with gratitude my obligation to Mr. Grierson, for the honour and happiness of Dr. Johnson's acquaintance and friendship, which continued uninterrupted and undiminished to his death; a connexion, that was at once the pride and happiness of my life.

"What pity it is, that so much wit and good sense as Johnson continually exhibited in conversation should perish unrecorded! Few persons quitted his company without perceiving themselves wiser and better than they were before. On serious subjects he flashed the most interesting conviction upon his auditors; and upon lighter topicks, you might have supposed—*Albano musas de monte locutas.*

"Though I can hope to add but little to the celebrity of so exalted a character, by any communications I can furnish, yet out of pure respect to his memory, I will venture to transmit to you some anecdotes concerning him, which fell under my own observation. The very *minutiæ* of such a character must be interesting, and may be compared to the filings of diamonds.

"In politicks he was deemed a Tory, but certainly was not so in the obnoxious or party sense of the term; for while he asserted the legal and salutary prerogatives of the crown, he no less respected the constitutional liberties of the people. Whiggism, at the time of the Revolution, he said, was accompanied with certain principles; but latterly, as a mere party distinction under Walpole and the Pelhams, was no

better than the politicks of stockjobbers, and the religion of infidels. Maxwell

"He detested the idea of governing by parliamentary corruption, and asserted most strenuously, that a prince steadily and conspicuously pursuing the interests of his people, could not fail of parliamentary concurrence. A prince of ability, he contended, might and should be the directing soul and spirit of his own administration; in short, his own minister and not the mere head of a party; and then, and not till then, would the royal dignity be sincerely respected.

"Johnson seemed to think that a certain degree of crown influence[1] over the houses of parliament (not meaning a corrupt and shameful dependence) was very salutary, nay, even necessary, in our mixed government. 'For,' said he, 'if the members were under no crown influence, and disqualified from receiving any gratification from court, and resembled, as they possibly might, Pym and Haslerig, and other stubborn and sturdy members of the long parliament, the wheels of government would be totally obstructed. Such men would oppose, merely to show their power, from envy, jealousy, and perversity of disposition; and not gaining themselves, would hate and oppose all who did: not loving the person of the prince, and conceiving they owed him little gratitude, from the mere spirit of insolence and contradiction, they would oppose and thwart him upon all occasions.'

"The inseparable imperfection annexed to all human governments consisted, he said, in not being able to create a sufficient fund of virtue and principle to carry the laws into due and effectual execution.

[1] On the necessity of crown influence, see Boucher's Sermons on the American Revolution, p. 218; and Paley's Moral Philosophy, B. VI. c. vii. p. 491, 4to. there quoted.—BLAKEWAY.

Maxwell Wisdom might plan, but virtue alone could execute. And where could sufficient virtue be found? A variety of delegated, and often discretionary powers must be intrusted somewhere; which, if not governed by integrity and conscience, would necessarily be abused, till at last the constable would sell his for a shilling.

"This excellent person was sometimes charged with abetting slavish and arbitrary principles of government. Nothing in my opinion could be a grosser calumny and misrepresentation; for how can it be rationally supposed, that he should adopt such pernicious and absurd opinions, who supported his philosophical character with so much dignity, was extremely jealous of his personal liberty and independence, and could not brook the smallest appearance of neglect or insult, even from the highest personages?

"But let us view him in some instances of more familiar life.

"His general mode of life, during my acquaintance, seemed to be pretty uniform. About twelve o'clock I commonly visited him, and frequently found him in bed, or declaiming over his tea, which he drank very plentifully. He generally had a levee of morning visitors, chiefly men of letters; Hawkesworth, Goldsmith, Murphy, Langton, Steevens, Beauclerk, &c. &c. and sometimes learned ladies; particularly I remember a French lady[1] of wit and fashion doing him the honour of a visit. He seemed to me to be considered as a kind of publick oracle, whom every body thought they had a right to visit and consult; and doubtless they were well rewarded. I never could discover how he found time for his compositions. He declaimed all the morning, then went to dinner at a tavern, where he commonly staid late,

[1] [No doubt Madame de Boufflers. See *post*, p. 428.—Ed.]

and then drank his tea at some friend's house, over which he loitered a great while, but seldom took supper. I fancy he must have read and wrote chiefly in the night, for I can scarcely recollect that he ever refused going with me to a tavern, and he often went to Ranelagh, which he deemed a place of innocent recreation. Maxwell

"He frequently gave all the silver in his pocket to the poor, who watched him, between his house and the tavern where he dined. He walked the streets at all hours, and said he was never robbed, for the rogues knew he had little money, nor had the appearance of having much.

"Though the most accessible and communicative man alive, yet when he suspected he was invited to be exhibited, he constantly spurned the invitation.

"Two young women from Staffordshire visited him when I was present, to consult him on the subject of Methodism, to which they were inclined. 'Come (said he), you pretty fools, dine with Maxwell and me at the Mitre, and we will talk over that subject;' which they did, and after dinner he took one of them upon his knee, and fondled her for half an hour together.

"Upon a visit to me at a country lodging near Twickenham, he asked what sort of society I had there. I told him but indifferent, as they chiefly consisted of opulent traders, retired from business. He said, he never much liked that class of people; 'For, sir (said he), they have lost the civility of tradesmen, without acquiring the manners of gentlemen.'

"Johnson was much attached to London[1]: he ob-

[1] Montaigne had the same affection for Paris, which Johnson had for London.—"Je l'aime tendrement (says he in his Essay on Vanity), jusque à ses verrues et à ses taches. Je ne suis François, que par cette grande cité, grande en peuples, grande en felicité de son assiette, mais sur tout grande et incom-

Maxwell served, that a man stored his mind better there than any where else; and that in remote situations a man's body might be feasted, but his mind was starved, and his faculties apt to degenerate, from want of exercise and competition. No place (he said) cured a man's vanity or arrogance so well as London; for as no man was either great or good *per se*, but as compared with others not so good or great, he was sure to find in the metropolis many his equals, and some his superiours. He observed, that a man in London was in less danger of falling in love indiscreetly, than any where else; for there the difficulty of deciding between the conflicting pretensions of a vast variety of objects kept him safe. He told me, that he had frequently been offered country preferment, if he would consent to take orders; but he could not leave the improved society of the capital, or consent to exchange the exhilarating joys and splendid decorations of publick life, for the obscurity, insipidity, and uniformity of remote situations.

"Speaking of[1] Mr. Harte, Canon of Windsor, and writer of 'The History of Gustavus Adolphus,' he much commended him as a scholar, and a man of the most companionable talents he had ever known. He said, the defects in his history proceeded not from imbecility, but from foppery.

parable en varieté et diversité des commoditez: la gloire de la France, et l'un des plus nobles ornamens du monde." Vol. iii. p. 321, edit. Amsterdam, 1781. —BLAKEWAY.

[1] [Walter Harte, born about 1707, A. M. of St. Mary Hall, in Oxford, was tutor to Lord Chesterfield's natural son, Mr. Stanhope, and was by his lordship's interest made Canon of Windsor; he died in 1774. Some doubt is thrown in the Biographical Dictionary on the dates of his birth and of some of his earlier publications, from *a* Walter Harte having graduated A. M. in 1720; but they were clearly not the same persons: there were, as Dr. Hall informs, no less than *four* Hartes who might have been living at the same time, viz. Walter Harte, Pemb. Coll. A. M. 5th May, 1674; Thomas Harte, Pemb. Coll. A. M. 19th Ap. 1681; Walter Harte, Pemb. Coll. A. M. 30th June, 1720; and Walter Harte, St. Mary Hall, A. M. 21st Jan. 1730: the latter was doubtless the poet and historian; the first Walter was probably his father; who the other two Hartes were does not appear; but the date of 1730 for the historian's degree of A. M. removes all the difficulties started in the Biog. Dictionary. See more of Harte, *post*, 30th March, 1780.—ED.]

"He loved, he said, the old black letter books; they were rich in matter, though their style was inelegant; wonderfully so, considering how conversant the writers were with the best models of antiquity. Maxwell

"Burton's 'Anatomy of Melancholy,' he said, was the only book that ever took him out of bed two hours sooner than he wished to rise.

"He frequently exhorted me to set about writing a History of Ireland, and archly remarked, there had been some good Irish writers, and that one Irishman might at least aspire to be equal to another. He had great compassion for the miseries and distresses of the Irish nation, particularly the Papists; and severely reprobated the barbarous debilitating policy of the British government, which, he said, was the most detestable mode of persecution. To a gentleman, who hinted such policy might be necessary to support the authority of the English government, he replied by saying, 'Let the authority of the English government perish, rather than be maintained by iniquity. Better would it be to restrain the turbulence of the natives by the authority of the sword, and to make them amenable to law and justice by an effectual and vigorous police, than to grind them to powder by all manner of disabilities and incapacities. Better (said he) to hang or drown people at once, than by an unrelenting persecution to beggar and starve them.' The moderation and humanity of the present times have, in some measure, justified the wisdom of his observations.

"Dr. Johnson was often accused of prejudices, nay, antipathy, with regard to the natives of Scotland [1]. Surely, so illiberal a prejudice never entered

[1] [It would be curious to know when his antipathy to Scotland became so strong, and what the cause of it was. If we could give any credit to the story told by Dr. M'Nichol and Miss Seward as to one of his uncles (see *ante*, p. 4. *n.*), it would account for this prejudice; yet many of his early friends and associates were Scots.—ED.]

[Maxwell] his mind: and it is well known, many natives of that respectable country possessed a large share in his esteem: nor were any of them ever excluded from his good offices as far as opportunity permitted. True it is, he considered the Scotch, nationally, as a crafty, designing people, eagerly attentive to their own interest, and too apt to overlook the claims and pretensions of other people. 'While they confine their benevolence, in a manner, exclusively to those of their own country, they expect to share in the good offices of other people. Now (said Johnson) this principle is either right or wrong; if right, we should do well to imitate such conduct; if wrong, we cannot too much detest it.'

"Being solicited to compose a funeral sermon for the daughter of a tradesman, he naturally inquired into the character of the deceased; and being told she was remarkable for her humility and condescension to inferiours, he observed, that those were very laudable qualities, but it might not be so easy to discover who the lady's inferiours were.

"Of a certain player [1] he remarked, that his conversation usually threatened and announced more than it performed; that he fed you with a continual renovation of hope, to end in a constant succession of disappointment.

"When exasperated by contradiction, he was apt to treat his opponents with too much acrimony: as, 'Sir, you don't see your way through that question:' —'Sir, you talk the language of ignorance.' On my observing to him that a certain gentleman had remained silent the whole evening, in the midst of a very brilliant and learned society, 'Sir (said he), the conversation overflowed, and drowned him.'

"His philosophy, though austere and solemn, was

[1] [No doubt, Mr. Sheridan.—ED.]

by no means morose and cynical, and never blunted the laudable sensibilities of his character, or exempted him from the influence of the tender passions. Want of tenderness, he always alleged, was want of parts, and was no less a proof of stupidity than depravity. Maxwell

"Speaking of Mr. Hanway, who published 'An Eight Days' Journey from London to Portsmouth,' 'Jonas (said he) acquired some reputation by travelling abroad[1], but lost it all by travelling at home.'

"Of the passion of love he remarked, that its violence and ill effects were much exaggerated; for who knows any real sufferings on that head, more than from the exorbitancy of any other passion?

"He much commended[2] 'Law's Serious Call,' which he said was the finest piece of hortatory theology in any language. 'Law (said he) fell latterly into the reveries of Jacob Behmen[3], whom Law alleged to have been somewhat in the same state with St. Paul, and to have seen *unutterable things*. Were it even so (said Johnson), Jacob would have resembled St. Paul still more, by not attempting to utter them.'

"He observed, that the established clergy in general did not preach plain enough; and that polished periods and glittering sentences flew over the heads of the common people, without any impression upon their hearts. Something might be necessary, he ob-

[1] [He had published "*An Account of the British Trade over the Caspian Sea, with Travels through Russia, Persia, Germany, and Holland.*" These travels contain very curious details of the then state of Persia.—ED.]

[2] [William Law was born 1686, entered in 1705 of Em. Col. Camb., Fellow in 1711, and A. M. in 1712. On the accession of the Hanover family he refused the oaths. He was tutor to Mr. Gibbon's father, at Putney, and finally retired with two pious ladies, Mrs. Hutchinson and Mrs. Gibbon, the aunt of the historian, to a kind of conventual seclusion at King's-cliffe, his native place: he died in 1761.—ED.]

[3] [A German fanatic, born near Gorlitz, in Upper Lusatia, in 1575. He wrote a multitude of religious works, all very mystical. He probably was deranged, and died in an ecstatic vision in 1624. Mr. Law passed many of the latter years of his life in translating Behmen's works, four volumes of which were published after Mr. Law's death.—ED.]

Maxwell served, to excite the affections of the common people, who were sunk in languor and lethargy, and therefore he supposed that the new concomitants of methodism might probably produce so desirable an effect. The mind, like the body, he observed, delighted in change and novelty, and, even in religion itself, courted new appearances and modifications. Whatever might be thought of some methodist teachers, he said, he could scarcely doubt the sincerity of that man, who travelled nine hundred miles in a month, and preached twelve times a week; for no adequate reward, merely temporal, could be given for such indefatigable labour.

"Of Dr. Priestley's theological works[1], he remarked, that they tended to unsettle every thing, and yet settled nothing.

"He was much affected by the death of his mother, and wrote to me to come and assist him to compose his mind, which indeed I found extremely agitated. He lamented that all serious and religious conversation was banished from the society of men, and yet great advantages might be derived from it. All acknowledged, he said, what hardly any body practised, the obligations we were under of making the concerns of eternity the governing principles of our lives. Every man, he observed, at last wishes for retreat: he sees his expectations frustrated in the world, and begins to wean himself from it, and to prepare for everlasting separation.

"He observed, that the influence of London now extended every where, and that from all manner of communication being opened, there shortly would be

[1] [None of Dr. Priestley's theological works were published at the time when it is supposed Dr. Maxwell's *intimacy* with Johnson terminated by his return to Ireland, which seems to have been about 1765 or 1766, so that this and such passages must be referred to his subsequent occasional visits to London. —ED.]

no remains of the ancient simplicity, or places of cheap retreat to be found. Maxwell

"He was no admirer of blank verse, and said it always failed, unless sustained by the dignity of the subject. In blank verse, he said, the language suffered more distortion, to keep it out of prose, than any inconvenience or limitation to be apprehended from the shackles and circumspection of rhyme.

"He reproved me once for saying grace without mention of the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and hoped in future I would be more mindful of the apostolical injunction[1].

"He refused to go out of a room before me at Mr. Langton's house, saying, he hoped he knew his rank better than to presume to take place of a doctor in divinity. I mention such little anecdotes, merely to show the peculiar turn and habit of his mind.

"He used frequently to observe, that there was more to be endured than enjoyed, in the general condition of human life; and frequently quoted those lines of Dryden:

> 'Strange cozenage! none would live past years again,
> Yet all hope pleasure from what still remain.'

For his part, he said, he never passed that week in his life which he would wish to repeat, were an angel to make the proposal to him.

"He was of opinion, that the English nation cultivated both their soil and their reason better than any other people; but admitted that the French, though not the highest, perhaps, in any department of literature, yet in every department were very high. Intellectual pre-eminence, he observed, was the highest superiority; and that every nation derived their highest reputation from the splendour and dignity of their writers. Voltaire, he said, was

[1] [Alluding probably to 5th Ephesians, v. 20, "*Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*"—Ed.]

Maxwell a good narrator, and that his principal merit consisted in a happy selection and arrangement of circumstances.

"Speaking of the French novels, compared with Richardson's, he said, they might be pretty baubles, but a wren was not an eagle.

"In a Latin conversation with the Pere Boscovich [1], at the house of Mrs. Cholmondely, I heard him maintain the superiority of Sir Isaac Newton over all foreign philosophers [2], with a dignity and eloquence that surprised that learned foreigner. It being observed to him, that a rage for every thing English prevailed much in France, after Lord Chatham's glorious war, he said, he did not wonder at it, for that we had drubbed those fellows into a proper reverence for us, and that their national petulance required periodical chastisement.

"Lord Lyttelton's [3] Dialogues he deemed a nugatory performance. 'That man,' said he, 'sat down to write a book, to tell the world what the world had all his life been telling him.'

"Somebody observing that the Scotch Highlanders, in the year 1745, had made surprising efforts, considering their numerous wants and disadvantages: 'Yes, sir,' said he, 'their wants were numerous: but you have not mentioned the greatest of them all—the want of law [4].'

[1] [See *post*, December, 1775, where Mr. Murphy states that this, or a similar conversation, took place in the house of Dr. Douglas, Bishop of Salisbury. —ED.]

[2] In a Discourse by Sir William Jones, addressed to the Asiatick Society, February 24, 1785, is the following passage:

"One of the most sagacious men in this age, who continues, I hope, to improve and adorn it, Samuel Johnson, remarked in my hearing, that if Newton had flourished in ancient Greece, he would have been worshipped as a divinity." —MALONE.

[3] [We shall hereafter see more of Johnson's low opinion of Lord Lyttelton. —ED.]

[4] [It is not very clear what was meant: *law, abstractedly*, would be one of the least *wants* of an invading *army*. Johnson perhaps meant either that their greatest want was, that they had not the law on their side, or that they had not the means of enforcing *discipline* by law.—ED.]

"Speaking of the *inward light*, to which some methodists pretended, he said, it was a principle utterly incompatible with social or civil security. 'If a man,' said he, 'pretends to a principle of action of which I can know nothing, nay, not so much as that he has it, but only that he pretends to it; how can I tell what that person may be prompted to do? When a person professes to be governed by a written ascertained law, I can then know where to find him.' Maxwell

"The poem of Fingal, he said, was a mere unconnected rhapsody, a tiresome repetition of the same images. 'In vain shall we look for the *lucidus ordo*, where there is neither end nor object, design or moral, *nec certa recurrit imago*.'

"Being asked by a young nobleman, what was become of the gallantry and military spirit of the old English nobility, he replied, 'Why, my lord, I 'll tell you what is become of it: it is gone into the city to look for a fortune.'

"Speaking of a dull tiresome fellow, whom he chanced to meet, he said, 'That fellow seems to me to possess but one idea, and that is a wrong one.'

"Much inquiry having been made concerning a gentleman, who had quitted a company where Johnson was, and no information being obtained, at last Johnson observed, that 'he did not care to speak ill of any man behind his back, but he believed the gentleman was an *attorney*.'

"He spoke with much contempt of the notice taken of Woodhouse[1], the poetical shoemaker. He said, it was all vanity and childishness; and that such objects were, to those who patronized them, mere mirrors of their own superiority. 'They had better,' said he, 'furnish the man with good implements for his trade,

[1] [There is an account of this *poetical prodigy*, as he was called, in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1764, p. 289. He was brought into notice by Shenstone. —Ed.]

Maxwell than raise subscriptions for his poems. He may make an excellent shoemaker, but can never make a good poet. A schoolboy's exercise may be a pretty thing for a schoolboy; but it is no treat for a man.'

"Speaking of Boetius, who was the favourite writer of the middle ages, he said it was very surprising that, upon such a subject, and in such a situation, he should be *magis philosophus quam Christianus.*

"Speaking of Arthur Murphy, whom he very much loved, 'I don't know,' said he, 'that Arthur can be classed with the very first dramatick writers; yet at present I doubt much whether we have any thing superiour to Arthur.'

"Speaking of the national debt, he said, it was an idle dream to suppose that the country could sink under it. Let the publick creditors be ever so clamorous, the interest of millions must ever prevail over that of thousands[1].

"Of Dr. Kennicott's Collations[2], he observed, that though the text should not be much mended thereby, yet it was no small advantage to know that we had as good a text as the most consummate industry and diligence could procure.

"Johnson observed, that so many objections might be made to every thing, that nothing could overcome them but the necessity of doing something. No man would be of any profession, as simply opposed to not being of it; but every one must do something.

[1] [He meant evidently that if the interest of *millions*—the country at large—required that the national debt should be spunged off, it would prevail over the interest of *thousands*—the holders of stock.—Ed.]

[2] [Dr. Benjamin Kennicott—born in 1718, A. M. and Fellow of Exeter College, Oxford, in 1750, and D.D. in 1760—having distinguished himself by a learned dissertation on the state of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, was, about 1759, persuaded by Archbishop Secker, and encouraged by a large subscription, to undertake a collation of all the Hebrew MSS. of the Old Testament. The first volume of his learned labour was, however, not published till 1776; and the second, with a general dissertation, completed the work in 1783. He was Radcliffe librarian, and canon of Christ Church, in which cathedral he was buried in 1783.—Ed.]

" He remarked, that a London parish was a very comfortless thing: for the clergyman seldom knew the face of one out of ten of his parishioners. Maxwell

" Of the late Mr. Mallet he spoke with no great respect; said, he was ready for any dirty job: that he had wrote against Byng at the instigation of the ministry, and was equally ready to write for him, provided he found his account in it.

" A gentleman who had been very unhappy in marriage, married immediately after his wife died: Johnson said, it was the triumph of hope over experience.

" He observed, that a man of sense and education should meet a suitable companion in a wife. It was a miserable thing when the conversation could only be such as, whether the mutton should be boiled or roasted, and probably a dispute about that.

" He did not approve of late marriages, observing that more was lost in point of time, than compensated for by any possible advantages. Even ill assorted marriages were preferable to cheerless celibacy.

" Of old Sheridan he remarked, that he neither wanted parts nor literature; but that his vanity and Quixotism obscured his merits.

" He said, foppery was never cured; it was the bad stamina of the mind, which, like those of the body, were never rectified: once a coxcomb, and always a coxcomb.

" Being told that Gilbert Cooper called him the Caliban of literature; 'Well,' said he, 'I must dub him the Punchinello [1].'

" Speaking of the old Earl of Cork and Orrery, he said, 'that man spent his life in catching at an object (literary eminence), which he had not power to grasp.

[1] [John Gilbert Cooper, Esq. author of a good deal of prose and verse, but best known as the author of a Life of Socrates, and a consequent dispute with Bishop Warburton. Cooper was in person short and squab; hence Johnson's allusion to *Punch*. He died in 1769.]

Maxwell " To find a substitution for violated morality, he said, was the leading feature in all perversions of religion.

" He often used to quote, with great pathos, those 3 Geor. 64. fine lines of Virgil:

> ' Optima quæque dies miseris mortalibus ævi
> Prima fugit; subeunt morbi tristisque senectus
> Et labor, et duræ rapit inclementia mortis.'

" Speaking of Homer, whom he venerated as the prince of poets[1], Johnson remarked that the advice given to Diomed[2] by his father, when he sent him to the Trojan war, was the noblest exhortation that could be instanced in any heathen writer, and comprised in a single line:

> Αἰὲν αριστεύειν, καὶ ὑπείροχον ἔμμεναι ἄλλων:

which, if I recollect well, is translated by Dr. Clarke thus: *semper appetere præstantissima, et omnibus aliis antecellere.*

" He observed, ' it was a most mortifying reflection for any man to consider, *what he had done*, compared with what *he might have done.*'

" He said few people had intellectual resources sufficient to forego the pleasures of wine. They could not otherwise contrive how to fill the interval between dinner and supper.

" He went with me, one Sunday, to hear my old master, Gregory Sharpe[3], preach at the Temple.—In

[1] [Johnson's usual seal, at least at one time of his life, was a head of Homer, as appears from the envelopes of his letters.—ED.]

[2] Dr. Maxwell's memory has deceived him. Glaucus is the person who received this counsel; and Clarke's translation of the passage (Il. x. l. 208), is as follows:

" Ut semper fortissime rem gererem, et superior virtute essem aliis."—JAMES BOSWELL.

[3] [Gregory Sharpe, D.D. F.R.S. and F.A.S., born in 1713. He published some religious works, and several critical essays on the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin languages. Dr. Maxwell calls him his " old master," because Dr. Sharpe was *master of the Temple* when Maxwell was assistant preacher. Dr. Sharpe died in the Temple-house in 1771.—ED.]

the prefatory prayer, Sharpe ranted about *liberty*, as a blessing most fervently to be implored, and its continuance prayed for. Johnson observed that our *liberty* was in no sort of danger:—he would have done much better to pray against our *licentiousness*. Maxwell

"One evening at Mrs. Montagu's, where a splendid company was assembled, consisting of the most eminent literary characters, I thought he seemed highly pleased with the respect and attention that were shown him, and asked him, on our return home, if he was not highly *gratified* by his visit. 'No, sir,' said he, 'not highly *gratified;* yet I do not recollect to have passed many evenings *with fewer objections.*'

"Though of no high extraction himself, he had much respect for birth and family, especially among ladies. He said, 'adventitious accomplishments may be possessed by all ranks; but one may easily distinguish the *born gentlewoman.*'

"He said, 'the poor in England were better provided for, than in any other country of the same extent: he did not mean little cantons, or petty republicks. Where a great proportion of the people,' said he, 'are suffered to languish in helpless misery, that country must be ill policed, and wretchedly governed: a decent provision for the poor is the true test of civilization. Gentlemen of education,' he observed, 'were pretty much the same in all countries; the condition of the lower orders, the poor especially, was the true mark of national discrimination.'

"When the corn laws were in agitation in Ireland, by which that country has been enabled not only to feed itself, but to export corn to a large amount; Sir Thomas Robinson[1] observed, that those laws might

[1] [The elder brother of the first Lord Rokeby, called *Long* Sir Thomas Robinson, on account of his height, and to distinguish him from Sir Thomas Robinson, first Lord Grantham. See *post*, p. 448.—Ed.]

Maxwell be prejudicial to the corn-trade of England. 'Sir Thomas,' said he, 'you talk the language of a savage: what, sir, would you prevent any people from feeding themselves, if by any honest means they can do it?'

"It being mentioned, that Garrick assisted Dr. Browne[1], the authour of the 'Estimate,' in some dramatick composition, 'No, sir,' said Johnson; 'he would no more suffer Garrick to write a line in his play, than he would suffer him to mount his pulpit.'

"Speaking of Burke[2], he said, 'It was commonly observed he spoke too often in parliament; but nobody could say he did not speak well, though too frequently and too familiarly.'

"Speaking of economy, he remarked, it was hardly worth while to save anxiously twenty pounds a year. If a man could save to that degree, so as to enable him to assume a different rank in society, then, indeed, it might answer some purpose.

"He observed, a principal source of erroneous judgment was viewing things partially and only on *one side;* as for instance, *fortune-hunters*, when they contemplated the fortunes *singly* and *separately*, it was a dazzling and tempting object; but when they came to possess the wives and their fortunes *together*, they began to suspect they had not made quite so good a bargain.

"Speaking of the late Duke of Northumberland[3]

[1] [Dr. John Browne, born in 1715; A. B. of St. John's, Cambridge, in 1735, and D. D. in 1755; besides his celebrated "Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times,"—a work which, in one year, ran through seven editions, and is now forgotten,—and several religious and miscellaneous works, he was the author of two tragedies, Barbarossa and Athelstan. He was a man of considerable but irregular genius; and he died insane, by his own hand, in 1766.—ED.]

[2] [Mr. Burke came into parliament in 1765.—ED.]

[3] [Sir Hugh Smithson, who, by his marriage with the daughter of Algernon, Duke of Somerset, became second Earl of Northumberland of the new creation, was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland from 1763 to 1765; he was created a duke in 1766.—ED.]

living very magnificently when Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, somebody remarked, it would be difficult to find a suitable successor to him: 'then,' exclaimed Johnson, '*he is only fit to succeed himself.*' Maxwell

"He advised me, if possible, to have a good orchard. He knew, he said, a clergyman of small income, who brought up a family very reputably, which he chiefly fed with apple dumplings[1].

"He said he had known several good scholars among the Irish gentlemen; but scarcely any of them correct in *quantity*. He extended the same observation to Scotland.

"Speaking of a certain prelate[2], who exerted himself very laudably in building churches and parsonage-houses; 'however,' said he, 'I do not find that he is esteemed a man of much professional learning, or a liberal patron of it;—yet, it is well where a man possesses any strong positive excellence.—Few have all kinds of merit belonging to their character. We must not examine matters too deeply.—No, sir, a *fallible being will fail somewhere.*'

"Talking of the Irish clergy, he said, 'Swift was a man of great parts, and the instrument of much good to his country.—Berkeley was a profound scholar, as well as a man of fine imagination; but Usher[3],' he said, 'was the great luminary of the Irish church; and a greater,' he added, 'no church could boast of; at least in modern times.'

[1] [This seems a strange resource. Perhaps Dr. Maxwell, at the interval of so many years, did not perfectly recollect Dr. Johnson's statement.—ED.]

[2] [Probably Dr. Richard Robinson, Bishop of Killaloe in 1751, of Ferns in 1759, of Kildare in 1761; Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of Ireland from 1765 to 1795. He was created Lord Rokeby in 1777, with remainder to the issue of his cousin, Matthew Robinson, of West Layton, two of whose sons have successively succeeded to that title. He built what is called Canterbury-gate, and the adjacent quadrangle, in Christ-Church, Oxford.—ED.]

[3] [The Irish church has too long neglected to pay its debt of gratitude to Usher; but the University of Dublin has at length determined to print at its press the works of her "great luminary." The edition, and the care of prefixing a life of the prelate, is confided to the able hands of Dr. Charles Elrington, regius professor of divinity in that university.—ED.]

Maxwell "We dined *tête-à-tête* at the Mitre, as I was preparing to return to Ireland, after an absence of many years. I regretted much leaving London, where I had formed many agreeable connexions: 'Sir,' said he, 'I don't wonder at it: no man, fond of letters, leaves London without regret. But remember, sir, you have seen and enjoyed a great deal:—you have seen life in its highest decorations, and the world has nothing new to exhibit.—No man is so well qualified to leave publick life as he who has long tried it and known it well. We are always hankering after untried situations, and imagining greater felicity from them than they can afford. No, sir, knowledge and virtue may be acquired in all countries, and your local consequence will make you some amends for the intellectual gratifications you relinquish.' Then he quoted the following lines with great pathos:

> 'He who has early known the pomps of state,
> (For things unknown, 'tis ignorance to condemn;)
> And after having view'd the gaudy bait,
> Can boldly say, the trifle I contemn;
> With such a one contented could I live,
> Contented could I die[1].'—

[1] Being desirous to trace these verses to the fountain head, after having in vain turned over several of our elder poets with the hope of lighting on them, I applied to Dr. Maxwell, now resident at Bath, for the purpose of ascertaining their authour: but that gentleman could furnish no aid on this occasion. At length the lines have been discovered by the authour's second son, Mr. James Boswell, in the London Magazine for July, 1732, where they form part of a poem on RETIREMENT, there published anonymously, but in fact (as he afterwards found) copied with some slight variations from one of Walsh's smaller poems, entitled "The Retirement;" and they exhibit another proof of what has been elsewhere observed by the authour of the work before us, that Johnson retained in his memory fragments of obscure or neglected poetry. In quoting verses of that description, he appears by a slight variation to have sometimes given them a moral turn, and to have dexterously adapted them to his own sentiments, where the original had a very different tendency. Thus, in the present instance (as Mr. J. Boswell observes to me), "the authour of the poem above-mentioned exhibits himself as having retired to the country, to avoid the vain follies of a town life,—ambition, avarice, and the pursuit of pleasure, contrasted with the enjoyments of the country, and the delightful conversation that the brooks, &c. furnish; which he holds to be infinitely more pleasing and instructive than any which towns afford. He is then led to consider the weakness of the human mind, and after lamenting that he (the writer) who is neither enslaved by avarice, ambition, or pleasure, has yet made himself a slave to *love*, he thus proceeds:

"He then took a most affecting leave of me; said, he knew it was a point of *duty* that called me away. —'We shall all be sorry to lose you,' said he: '*laudo tamen.*'" Maxwell

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This is to me a memorable year; for in it I had the happiness to obtain the acquaintance of that extraordinary man whose memoirs I am now writing;

'If this dire passion never will be done,
If beauty always must my heart enthral,
O, rather let me be enslaved by *one*,
Than madly thus become a slave to all:
'One *who has early known the pomp of state*,
(*For things unknown 'tis ignorance to condemn*),
And, after having view'd the gaudy bait,
Can coldly *say, the trifle I contemn*;
'In her blest arms *contented could I live*,
Contented could I die. But, O my mind
Imaginary scenes of bliss deceive
With hopes of joys impossible to find.'"

Another instance of Johnson's retaining in his memory verses by obscure authours is given, [*post*, 27th August, 1773], where, in consequence of hearing a girl spinning in a chamber over that in which he was sitting, he repeated these lines, which he said were written by one Giffard, a clergyman; but the poem in which they are introduced has hitherto been undiscovered:

"Verse sweetens toil, however rude the sound:
All at her work the village maiden sings;
Nor while she turns the giddy wheel around,
Revolves the sad vicissitude of things."

In the autumn of 1782, when he was at Brighthelmstone, he frequently accompanied Mr. Phillip Metcalfe in his chaise, to take the air; and the conversation in one of their excursions happening to turn on a celebrated historian, since deceased, he repeated, with great precision, some verses, as very characteristick of that gentleman. These furnish another proof of what has been above observed; for they are found in a very obscure quarter, among some anonymous poems appended to the second volume of a collection frequently printed by Lintot, under the title of Pope's MISCELLANIES:

"See how the wand'ring Danube flows,
Realms and religions parting;
A friend to all true christian foes,
To Peter, Jack, and Martin.
"Now Protestant, and Papist now,
Not constant long to either,
At length an infidel does grow,
And ends his journey neither.
"Thus many a youth I 've known set out,
Half Protestant, half Papist,
And rambling long the world about,
Turn infidel or atheist."

In reciting these verses, I have no doubt that Johnson substituted some word for *infidel* in the second stanza, to avoid the disagreeable repetition of the same expression.—MALONE.

an acquaintance which I shall ever esteem as one of the most fortunate circumstances in my life. Though then but two-and-twenty, I had for several years read his works with delight and instruction, and had the highest reverence for their authour, which had grown up in my fancy into a kind of mysterious veneration, by figuring to myself a state of solemn elevated abstraction, in which I supposed him to live in the immense metropolis of London. Mr. Gentleman[1], a native of Ireland, who passed some years in Scotland as a player, and as an instructor in the English language, a man whose talents and worth were depressed by misfortunes, had given me a representation of the figure and manner of DICTIONARY JOHNSON! as he was then generally called[2]; and during my first visit to London, which was for three months in 1760, Mr. Derrick the poet[3], who was Gentleman's friend and countryman, flattered me with hopes that he would introduce me to Johnson, an honour of which I was very ambitious. But he never found an opportunity; which made me doubt that he had promised to do what was not in his power; till Johnson some years afterwards told me, "Derrick, sir, might very well have intro-

[1] [Francis Gentleman was born in 1728, and educated in Dublin. His father was an officer in the army, and he, at the age of fifteen, obtained a commission in the same regiment; on the reduction, at the peace of 1748, he lost this profession, and adopted that of the stage, both as an author and an actor; in neither of which did he attain any eminence. He died in December, 1784; having, in the later course of his life, experienced "all the hardships of a wandering actor, and all the disappointments of a friendless author."—ED.]

[2] As great men of antiquity, such as Scipio *Africanus*, had an epithet added to their names, in consequence of some celebrated action, so my illustrious friend was often called DICTIONARY JOHNSON, from that wonderful achievement of genius and labour, his "Dictionary of the English Language;" the merit of which I contemplate with more and more admiration.—BOSWELL. [Boswell himself was at one time anxious to be called *Corsica* Boswell. See *post*, September, 1769.—ED.]

[3] [Samuel Derrick was an Irishman, born about 1724; he was apprenticed to a linendraper, but abandoned trade for the stage and literature; he made, at least, one attempt as actor, but failed; as an author he was more successful, but is now almost equally forgotten. He succeeded Nash as master of the ceremonies at Bath; but his extravagance and irregularities always kept him poor, and he died in 1760 in very necessitous circumstances.—ED.]

duced you. I had a kindness for Derrick, and am sorry he is dead."

In the summer of 1761, Mr. Thomas Sheridan was at Edinburgh, and delivered lectures upon the English Language and Publick Speaking to large and respectable audiences. I was often in his company, and heard him frequently expatiate upon Johnson's extraordinary knowledge, talents, and virtues, repeat his pointed sayings, describe his particularities, and boast of his being his guest sometimes till two or three in the morning. At his house I hoped to have many opportunities of seeing the sage, as Mr. Sheridan obligingly assured me I should not be disappointed.

When I returned to London in the end of 1762, to my surprise and regret I found an irreconcilable difference had taken place between Johnson and Sheridan. A pension of two hundred pounds a year had been given to Sheridan. Johnson, who, as has been already mentioned, thought slightingly of Sheridan's art, upon hearing that he was also pensioned, exclaimed, "What! have they given *him* a pension? Then it is time for me to give up mine." Whether this proceeded from a momentary indignation, as if it were an affront to his exalted merit that a player should be rewarded in the same manner with him, or was the sudden effect of a fit of peevishness, it was unluckily[1] said, and, indeed, cannot be justified. Mr. Sheridan's pension was granted to him not as a player, but as a sufferer[2] in the cause of govern-

[1] [*Unluckily* is too mild a term; it was ungrateful as well as arrogant, for we have seen that Sheridan had no small share in obtaining Johnson his pension—*he rang the bell*, as Lord Loughborough admitted. Nor was Johnson's, as Mr. Boswell represents it, a *sudden* fit of peevishness: too many instances will occur in the following pages of the continued and studied contumely with which Johnson pursued Sheridan.—Ed.]

[2] [Mr. Boswell, in his tenderness to the *amour propre* of Doctor Johnson, cannot bear to admit that Sheridan's *literary* character had any thing to do with the pension, and no doubt he endeavoured to soften Johnson's resentment by

ment, when he was manager of the Theatre Royal in Ireland, when parties ran high in 1753. And it must also be allowed that he was a man of literature, and had considerably improved the arts of reading and speaking with distinctness and propriety.

Besides, Johnson should have recollected that Mr. Sheridan taught pronunciation[1] to Mr. Alexander Wedderburne, whose sister was married to Sir Harry Erskine, an intimate friend of Lord Bute, who was the favourite of the king; and surely the most outrageous whig will not maintain, that whatever ought to be the principle in the disposal of *offices*, a *pension* ought never to be granted from any bias of court connexion. Mr. Macklin, indeed, shared with Mr. Sheridan the honour of instructing Mr. Wedderburne[2]; and though it was too late in life for a Ca-

giving, as he does in the above passage, this favour a *political* colour; but there seems no reason to believe that Sheridan's pension was given to him as a sufferer by a play-house riot. It was probably granted (*et hinc illæ lacrymæ*) on the same motive as Johnson's own, namely, the desire of the king and Lord Bute to distinguish the commencement of the new reign by a patronage of literature. Indeed this is rendered almost certain by the following passages of the letters of Mrs. Sheridan to Mr. White:

London, Feb. 25th, 1762.—"Mr. Sheridan's Dissertation is, you see, addressed to Lord Bute. It has been as well received by him as we could possibly wish, and even beyond the expectation of our friends. He expressed himself highly pleased with the design, and sent Mr. Sheridan word that it should receive all countenance and encouragement."

London, March 30, 1762.—"I believe I told you in my last that Lord Bute had received the Dissertation and Address very well, and promised the plan all countenance and encouragement."

London, Nov. 29, 1762.—"Mr. Sheridan is now, as I mentioned to you formerly, busied in the English Dictionary, which he is encouraged to pursue with the more alacrity as his majesty has vouchsafed him such a mark of royal favour. I suppose you have heard that he has granted him a pension of 200*l.* a year, merely as an encouragement to his undertaking, and this without solicitation, which makes it the more valuable."—*White's Misc. Nova*, p. 104. 107. 111.—Ed.]

[1] [In all this pretended defence of Sheridan's pension, it is easy to see that Boswell is infected with Johnson's spirit, and does all he can to depreciate the motives of the grant. He seems also inclined to sneer a little at his own countryman, Lord Loughborough, forgetting that, even if he had committed the *offence* (which is not proved) of suggesting Sheridan's pension, he had actually procured Johnson's.—Ed.]

[2] [This is an odd coincidence. A *Scotchman* who wishes to learn a pure *English* pronunciation employs one preceptor who happens to be an *Irishman*, and afterwards *another*, likewise an *Irishman*, and this Irish-taught Scot becomes —and mainly by his oratory—one of the chief ornaments of the English senate, and the first subject in the British empire.—Ed.]

ledonian to acquire the genuine English cadence, yet so successful were Mr. Wedderburne's instructors, and his own unabating endeavours, that he got rid of the coarse part of his Scotch accent, retaining only as much of the "native wood-note wild," as to mark his country; which, if any Scotchman should affect to forget, I should heartily despise him. Notwithstanding the difficulties which are to be encountered by those who have not had the advantage of an English education, he by degrees formed a mode of speaking, to which Englishmen do not deny the praise of elegance. Hence his distinguished oratory, which he exerted in his own country as an advocate in the court of session, and a ruling elder of the *kirk*, has had its fame and ample reward, in much higher spheres. When I look back on this noble person at Edinburgh, in situations so unworthy of his brilliant powers, and behold LORD LOUGHBOROUGH at London, the change seems almost like one of the metamorphoses in Ovid, and as his two preceptors, by refining his utterance, gave currency to his talents, we may say in the words of that poet, "*Nam vos mutastis.*"

I have dwelt the longer upon this remarkable instance of successful parts and assiduity; because it affords animating encouragement to other gentlemen of North Britain to try their fortunes in the southern part of the island, where they may hope to gratify their utmost ambition; and now that we are one people by the Union, it would surely be illiberal to maintain, that they have not an equal title with the natives of any other part of his majesty's dominions.

Johnson complained that a man who disliked him repeated his sarcasm to Mr. Sheridan, without telling him what followed, which was, that after a pause he added, "However, I am glad that Mr. Sheridan has

a pension, for he is a very good man." Sheridan could never forgive his hasty contemptuous expression. It rankled in his mind; and though I informed him of all that Johnson said, and that he would be very glad to meet him amicably, he positively declined repeated offers which I made, and once went off abruptly from a house where he and I were engaged to dine, because he was told that Johnson was to be there. I have no sympathetick feeling with such persevering resentment[1]. It is painful when there is a breach between those who have lived together socially and cordially; and I wonder that there is not, in all such cases, a mutual wish that it should be healed. I could perceive that Mr. Sheridan was *by no means satisfied*[2] with Johnson's acknowledging him to be a good man. That could not soothe his injured vanity. I could not but smile, at the same time that I was offended, to observe Sheridan in the Life of Swift, which he afterwards published, attempting, in the writhings of his resentment, to depreciate Johnson, by characterising him as "A writer of gigantick fame, in these days of little men:" that very Johnson whom he once so highly admired and venerated[3].

This rupture with Sheridan deprived Johnson of one of his most agreeable resources for amusement

[1] [But Johnson seems to have kept it alive by *persevering* sarcasms.—ED.]

[2] [Why should he have been? His *goodness* had nothing to say to the question. Sheridan's pension was granted to him for his literary character, and Johnson's following up his insolent attack on his talents by a supercilious acknowledgment that he was nevertheless *a very good man*, was an additional insult.—ED.]

[3] [This would have been very slight retaliation; but, in truth, Mr. Boswell is not quite fair in representing it as an attempt at retaliation on Sheridan's own account. Dr. Johnson had depreciated the talents and character of Dr. Swift, not merely in conversation, but in his *Lives of the Poets*. Sheridan, in his *Life of Swift*, advocated the cause of the dean, for whom he had a natural and hereditary veneration; and though he observed on Johnson's criticisms and censures with a severity sharpened probably by his personal feelings, he treated him on all other points with *moderation and respect*.—ED.]

in his lonely evenings; for Sheridan's well-informed, animated, and bustling mind never suffered conversation to stagnate; and Mrs. Sheridan was a most agreeable companion to an intellectual man. She was sensible, ingenious, unassuming, yet communicative. I recollect, with satisfaction, many pleasing hours which I passed with her under the hospitable roof of her husband, who was to me a very kind friend. Her novel, entitled "Memoirs of Miss Sydney Biddulph," contains an excellent moral, while it inculcates a future state of retribution [1]; and what it teaches is impressed upon the mind by a series of as deep distress as can affect humanity, in the amiable and pious heroine who goes to her grave unrelieved, but resigned, and full of hope of "heaven's mercy." Johnson paid her this high compliment upon it: "I know not, madam, that you have a right, upon moral principles, to make your readers suffer so much."

Mr. Thomas Davies the actor, who then kept a

[1] My position has been very well illustrated by Mr. Belsham of Bedford, in his Essay on Dramatick Poetry. "The fashionable doctrines (says he) both of moralists and criticks in these times is, that virtue and happiness are constant concomitants; and it is regarded as a kind of dramatick impiety to maintain that virtue should not be rewarded, nor vice punished in the last scene of the last act of every tragedy. This conduct in our modern poets is, however, in my opinion, extremely injudicious; for it labours in vain to inculcate a doctrine in theory, which every one knows to be false in fact, viz. that virtue in real life is always productive of happiness, and vice of misery. Thus Congreve concludes the tragedy of 'The Mourning Bride' with the following foolish couplet:

'For blessings ever wait on virtuous deeds,
And, though a late, a sure reward succeeds.'

"When a man eminently virtuous, a Brutus, a Cato, or a Socrates, finally sinks under the pressure of accumulated misfortune, we are not only led to entertain a more indignant hatred of vice than if he rose from his distress, but we are inevitably induced to cherish the sublime idea that a day of future retribution will arrive when he shall receive not merely poetical, but real and substantial justice." Essays Philosophical, Historical, and Literary, London, 1791, Vol. II. 8vo. p. 317.

This is well reasoned and well expressed. I wish, indeed, that the ingenious authour had not thought it necessary to introduce any *instance* of "a man eminently virtuous;" as he would then have avoided mentioning such a ruffian as Brutus under that description. Mr. Belsham discovers in his "Essays" so much reading and thinking, and good composition, that I regret his not having been fortunate enough to be educated a member of our excellent national establishment. Had he not been nursed in nonconformity, he probably would not have been tainted with those heresies (as I sincerely, and on no slight investigation, think them) both in religion and politicks, which, while I read, I am sure, with candour, I cannot read without offence.—BOSWELL.

bookseller's shop in Russell-street, Covent-garden[1], told me that Johnson was very much his friend, and came frequently to his house, where he more than once invited me to meet him: but by some unlucky accident or other he was prevented from coming to us.

Mr. Thomas Davies was a man of good understanding and talents, with the advantage of a liberal education. Though somewhat pompous, he was an entertaining companion; and his literary performances have no inconsiderable share of merit. He was a friendly and very hospitable man. Both he and his wife (who has been celebrated[2] for her beauty), though upon the stage for many years, maintained an uniform decency of character; and Johnson esteemed them, and lived in as easy an intimacy with them as with any family which he used to visit. Mr. Davies recollected several of Johnson's remarkable sayings, and was one of the best of the many imitators of his voice and manner, while relating them. He increased my impatience more and more to see the extraordinary man whose works I highly valued, and whose conversation was reported to be so peculiarly excellent.

At last, on Monday the 16th of May, when I was sitting in Mr. Davies's back parlour, after having drunk tea with him and Mrs. Davies, Johnson unexpectedly came into the shop[3]; and Mr. Davies

[1] No. 8.—The very place where I was fortunate enough to be introduced to the illustrious subject of this work deserves to be particularly marked. I never pass by it without feeling reverence and regret.—BOSWELL.

[2] [By Churchill, in the Rosciad, where, rather in contempt of Davies than out of compliment to his wife, he exclaims,

"——— on my life,
That Davies has a very pretty wife."

Davies's pompous manner of reciting his part the satirist describes with more force than delicacy:

"He mouths a sentence as curs mouth a bone."

This sarcasm drove, it is said, (*post*, 7th April, 1778), poor Davies from the stage.—ED.]

[3] Mr. Murphy, in his "Essay on the Life and Genius of Dr. Johnson," has given an account of this meeting considerably different from mine, I am persuaded without any consciousness of errour. His memory, at the end of near thirty years, has undoubtedly deceived him, and he supposes himself to have

having perceived him through the glass-door in the room in which we were sitting, advancing towards us, he announced his awful approach to me somewhat in the manner of an actor in the part of Horatio, when he addresses Hamlet on the appearance of his father's ghost, "Look, my lord, it comes." I found that I had a very perfect idea of Johnson's figure, from the portrait of him painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds soon after he had published his Dictionary, in the attitude of sitting in his easy chair in deep meditation; which was the first picture his friend did for him, which Sir Joshua very kindly presented to me, and from which an engraving has been made for this work. Mr. Davies mentioned my name, and respectfully introduced me to him. I was much agitated; and recollecting his prejudice against the Scotch, of which I had heard much, I said to Davies, "Don't tell him where I come from." "From Scotland," cried Davies, roguishly. "Mr. Johnson (said I), I do indeed come from Scotland, but I cannot help it." I am willing to flatter myself that I meant this as light pleasantry to soothe and conciliate him, and not as an humiliating abasement at the expense of my country. But however that might be, this speech was somewhat unlucky; for with that quickness of wit for which he was so remarkable, he seized the expression "come from Scotland," which I used in the sense of being of that country; and, as if I had

been present at a scene, which he has probably heard inaccurately described by others. In my note *taken on the very day*, in which I am confident I marked every thing material that passed, no mention is made of this gentleman; and I am sure, that I should not have omitted one so well known in the literary world. It may easily be imagined that this my first interview with Dr. Johnson, with all its circumstances, made a strong impression on my mind, and would be registered with peculiar attention.—BOSWELL.

It is remarkable, that in the editions of Murphy's Life of Johnson, published subsequently to the appearance of this note, in 1791, he never corrected the misstatement here mentioned.—MALONE.

[This is an error on the part of Mr. Malone. This note was not in Boswell's first edition, published in 1791, and indeed could not be, as Murphy's Life was not published till 1793.—ED.]

said that I had come away from it, or left it, retorted, "That, sir, I find, is what a very great many of your countrymen cannot help." This stroke stunned me a good deal; and when we had sat down, I felt myself not a little embarrassed, and apprehensive of what might come next. He then addressed himself to Davies: "What do you think of Garrick? He has refused me an order for the play for Miss Williams, because he knows the house will be full, and that an order will be worth three shillings." Eager to take any opening to get into conversation with him, I ventured to say, "O, sir, I cannot think Mr. Garrick would grudge such a trifle to you." "Sir (said he, with a stern look), I have known David Garrick longer than you have done: and I know no right you have to talk to me on the subject." Perhaps I deserved this check; for it was rather presumptuous in me, an entire stranger, to express any doubt of the justice of his animadversion upon his old acquaintance and pupil[1]. I now felt myself much mortified, and began to think that the hope which I had long indulged of obtaining his acquaintance was blasted. And, in truth, had not my ardour been uncommonly strong, and my resolution uncommonly persevering, so rough a reception might have deterred me for ever from making any further attempts. Fortunately, however, I remained upon the field not wholly discomfited; and was soon rewarded by hearing some of his conversation, of which I preserved the following short

[1] That this was a *momentary* sally against Garrick there can be no doubt; for at Johnson's desire he had, some years before, given a benefit-night at his theatre to this very person, by which she had got two hundred pounds. Johnson, indeed, upon all other occasions, when I was in his company, praised the very liberal charity of Garrick. I once mentioned to him, "It is observed, sir, that you attack Garrick yourself, but will suffer nobody else to do it." Johnson, (smiling) "Why, sir, that is true."—BOSWELL.

[These *sallies* are of too frequent recurrence to allow us to receive Boswell's apologetical assertion that they were *momentary*.—ED.]

minute, without marking the questions and observations by which it was produced.

"People (he remarked) may be taken in once, who imagine that an authour is greater in private life than other men. Uncommon parts require uncommon opportunities for their exertion.

"In barbarous society, superiority of parts is of real consequence. Great strength or great wisdom is of much value to an individual. But in more polished times there are people to do every thing for money; and then there are a number of other superiorities, such as those of birth and fortune, and rank, that dissipate men's attention, and leave no extraordinary share of respect for personal and intellectual superiority. This is wisely ordered by Providence, to preserve some equality among mankind."

"Sir, this book ('The Elements of Criticism[1],' which he had taken up), is a pretty essay, and deserves to be held in some estimation, though much of it is chimerical."

Speaking of one[2] who with more than ordinary boldness attacked publick measures and the royal family, he said, "I think he is safe from the law, but he is an abusive scoundrel; and instead of applying to my lord chief justice to punish him, I would send half a dozen footmen and have him well ducked."

"The notion of liberty amuses the people of England, and helps to keep off the *tædium vitæ*. When a butcher tells you that *his heart bleeds for his country*, he has, in fact, no uneasy feeling."

"Sheridan will not succeed at Bath with his ora-

[1] [By Henry Home, Lord Kames.—ED.]

[2] [Mr. Wilkes, no doubt. Boswell was a friend and, *personally*, an admirer of Wilkes, and therefore concealed the name.—ED.]

tory. Ridicule has gone down before him, and, I doubt, Derrick is his enemy [1].

"Derrick may do very well, as long as he can outrun his character; but the moment his character gets up with him, it is all over."

It is, however, but just to record, that some years afterwards, when I reminded him of this sarcasm, he said, "Well, but Derrick has now got a character that he need not run away from."

I was highly pleased with the extraordinary vigour of his conversation, and regretted that I was drawn away from it by an engagement at another place. I had for a part of the evening been left alone with him, and had ventured to make an observation now and then, which he received very civilly; so that I was satisfied that though there was a roughness in his manner, there was no ill-nature in his disposition. Davies followed me to the door, and when I complained to him a little of the hard blows which the great man had given me, he kindly took upon him to console me by saying, "Don't be uneasy. I can see he likes you very well."

A few days afterwards I called on Davies, and asked him if he thought I might take the liberty of waiting on Mr. Johnson at his chambers in the Temple. He said I certainly might, and that Mr. Johnson would take it as a compliment. So on Tuesday the 24th of May, after having been enlivened by the witty sallies of Messieurs Thornton, Wilkes, Churchill, and Lloyd, with whom I had passed the morning, I boldly repaired to Johnson. His chambers were on the first floor of No. 1, Inner Temple-lane, and I entered them with an impression

[1] Mr. Sheridan was then reading lectures upon oratory at Bath, where Derrick was master of the ceremonies; or, as the phrase is, king.—BOSWELL.

given me by the Rev. Dr. Blair of Edinburgh, who had been introduced to him not long before, and described his having "found the giant in his den;" an expression which, when I came to be pretty well acquainted with Johnson, I repeated to him, and he was diverted at this picturesque account of himself. Dr. Blair had been presented to him by Dr. James Fordyce. At this time the controversy concerning the pieces published by Mr. James Macpherson, as translations from Ossian, was at its height. Johnson had all along denied their authenticity; and, what was still more provoking to their admirers, maintained that they had no merit. The subject having been introduced by Dr. Fordyce, Dr. Blair, relying on the internal evidence of their antiquity, asked Dr. Johnson whether he thought any man of a modern age could have written such poems? Johnson replied, "Yes, sir, many men, many women, and many children." Johnson, at this time, did not know that Dr. Blair had just published a Dissertation, not only defending their authenticity, but seriously ranking them with the poems of Homer and Virgil; and when he was afterwards informed of this circumstance, he expressed some displeasure at Dr. Fordyce's having suggested the topick, and said, "I am not sorry that they got thus much for their pains. Sir, it was like leading one to talk of a book, when the authour is concealed behind the door."

He received me very courteously; but, it must be confessed, that his apartment, and furniture, and morning dress, were sufficiently uncouth. His brown suit of clothes looked very rusty; he had on a little old shrivelled unpowdered wig, which was too small for his head; his shirt-neck and knees of his breeches were loose, his black worsted stockings ill drawn up; and he had a pair of unbuckled shoes by way of slip-

pers. But all these slovenly particularities were forgotten the moment that he began to talk. Some gentlemen, whom I do not recollect, were sitting with him; and when they went away, I also rose; but he said to me, "Nay, don't go." "Sir," said I, "I am afraid that I intrude upon you. It is benevolent to allow me to sit and hear you." He seemed pleased with this compliment, which I sincerely paid him, and answered, "Sir, I am obliged to any man who visits me." I have preserved the following short minute of what passed this day.

"Madness frequently discovers itself merely by unnecessary deviation from the usual modes of the world. My poor friend Smart showed the disturbance of his mind, by falling upon his knees, and saying his prayers in the street, or in any other unusual place. Now although, rationally speaking, it is greater madness not to pray at all, than to pray as Smart did, I am afraid there are so many who do not pray, that their understanding is not called in question."

Concerning this unfortunate poet, Christopher Smart, who was confined in a madhouse, he had, at another time, the following conversation with Dr. Burney. BURNEY. "How does poor Smart do, sir; is he likely to recover?" JOHNSON. "It seems as if his mind had ceased to struggle with the disease; for he grows fat upon it." BURNEY. "Perhaps, sir, that may be from want of exercise?" JOHNSON. "No, sir; he has partly as much exercise as he used to have, for he digs in the garden. Indeed, before his confinement, he used for exercise to walk to the alehouse: but he was *carried* back again. I did not think he ought to be shut up. His infirmities were not noxious to society. He insisted on people praying with him; and I'd as lief pray with Kit Smart

as any one else. Another charge was, that he did not love clean linen; and I have no passion for it."

Johnson continued. "Mankind have a great aversion to intellectual labour[1]; but even supposing knowledge to be easily attainable, more people would be content to be ignorant than would take even a little trouble to acquire it.

"The morality of an action depends on the motive from which we act. If I fling half a crown to a beggar with intention to break his head, and he picks it up and buys victuals with it, the physical effect is good; but with respect to me, the action is very wrong. So, religious exercises, if not performed with an intention to please God, avail us nothing. As our Saviour says of those who perform them from other motives, 'Verily they have their reward.'

"The Christian religion has very strong evidences. It, indeed, appears in some degree strange to reason; but in history we have undoubted facts, against which, in reasoning *à priori*, we have more arguments than we have for them; but then, testimony has great weight, and casts the balance. I would recommend to every man whose faith is yet unsettled, Grotius, Dr. Pearson, and Dr. Clarke."

Talking of Garrick, he said, "He is the first man in the world for sprightly conversation."

When I rose a second time, he again pressed me to stay, which I did.

He told me, that he generally went abroad at four in the afternoon, and seldom came home till two in the morning. I took the liberty to ask if he did not think it wrong to live thus, and not make more use of his great talents. He owned it was a bad habit. On reviewing, at the distance of many years, my

[1] [See *post*, 30th July, 1763, an opinion somewhat different.—ED.]

journal of this period, I wonder how, at my first visit, I ventured to talk to him so freely, and that he bore it with so much indulgence.

Before we parted, he was so good as to promise to favour me with his company one evening at my lodgings; and, as I took my leave, shook me cordially by the hand. It is almost needless to add, that I felt no little elation at having now so happily established an acquaintance of which I had been so long ambitious.

My readers will, I trust, excuse me for being thus minutely circumstantial, when it is considered that the acquaintance of Dr. Johnson was to me a most valuable acquisition, and laid the foundation of whatever instruction and entertainment they may receive from my collections concerning the great subject of the work which they are now perusing.

I did not visit him again till Monday, June 13, at which time I recollect no part of his conversation, except that when I told him I had been to see Johnson [1] ride upon three horses, he said, "Such a man, sir, should be encouraged; for his performances show the extent of the human powers in one instance, and thus tend to raise our opinion of the faculties of man. He shows what may be attained by persevering application; so that every man may hope, that by giving as much application, although perhaps he may never ride three horses at a time, or dance upon a wire, yet he may be equally expert in whatever profession he has chosen to pursue."

He again shook me by the hand at parting, and asked me why I did not come oftener to him. Trusting that I was now in his good graces, I answered,

[1] ["In the year 1762 one Johnson, an Irishman, exhibited many feats of activity in horsemanship, and was, it is believed, the first performer in that time in or about London. He was an active clever fellow in his way, and seemed to be patronised by Mr. Burke, then a student in the Temple."—*Prior's Life of Burke*, vol. i. p. 124.—ED.]

that he had not given me much encouragement, and reminded him of the check I had received from him at our first interview. "Poh, poh! (said he, with a complacent smile), never mind these things. Come to me as often as you can. I shall be glad to see you."

I had learnt that his place of frequent resort was the Mitre tavern in Fleet-street, where he loved to sit up late, and I begged I might be allowed to pass an evening with him there soon, which he promised I should. A few days afterwards I met him near Temple-bar, about one o'clock in the morning, and asked if he would then go to the Mitre. "Sir (said he), it is too late; they won't let us in. But I'll go with you another night with all my heart."

A revolution of some importance in my plan of life had just taken place; for instead of procuring a commission in the foot-guards, which was my own inclination, I had, in compliance with my father's wishes, agreed to study the law, and was soon to set out for Utrecht, to hear the lectures of an excellent civilian in that university, and then to proceed on my travels. Though very desirous of obtaining Dr. Johnson's advice and instructions on the mode of pursuing my studies, I was at this time so occupied, shall I call it? or so dissipated by the amusements of London, that our next meeting was not till Saturday, June 25, when happening to dine at Clifton's eating-house, in Butcher-row, I was surprised to perceive Johnson come in and take his seat at another table. The mode of dining, or rather being fed, at such houses in London, is well known to many to be particularly unsocial, as there is no ordinary, or united company, but each person has his own mess, and is under no obligation to hold any intercourse with any one. A liberal and full-minded man, however, who loves to talk, will break through this churlish and unsocial restraint.

Johnson and an Irish gentleman got into a dispute concerning the cause of some part of mankind being black. "Why, sir (said Johnson), it has been accounted for in three ways: either by supposing that they are the posterity of Ham, who was cursed; or that God at first created two kinds of men, one black and another white; or that by the heat of the sun the skin is scorched, and so acquires a sooty hue. This matter has been much canvassed among naturalists, but has never been brought to any certain issue." What the Irishman said is totally obliterated from my mind; but I remember that he became very warm and intemperate in his expressions: upon which Johnson rose, and quietly walked away. When he had retired, his antagonist took his revenge, as he thought, by saying, "He has a most ungainly figure, and an affectation of pomposity unworthy of a man of genius."

Johnson had not observed that I was in the room. I followed him, however, and he agreed to meet me in the evening at the Mitre. I called on him, and we went thither at nine. We had a good supper, and port wine, of which he then sometimes drank a bottle. The orthodox high-church sound of the Mitre,—the figure and manner of the celebrated Samuel Johnson,—the extraordinary power and precision of his conversation, and the pride arising from finding myself admitted as his companion, produced a variety of sensations, and a pleasing elevation of mind beyond what I had ever before experienced. I find in my Journal the following minute of our conversation, which, though it will give but a very faint notion of what passed, is, in some degree, a valuable record; and it will be curious in this view, as showing how habitual to his mind were some opinions which appear in his works.

"Colley Cibber[1], sir, was by no means a block-

[1] [Colley Cibber was born in 1671, bore arms in favour of the revolution, and

head: but by arrogating to himself too much, he was in danger of losing that degree of estimation to which he was entitled. His friends gave out that he *intended* his birthday Odes should be bad: but that was not the case, sir; for he kept them many months by him, and a few years before he died he showed me one of them, with great solicitude to render it as perfect as might be, and I made some corrections, to which he was not very willing to submit. I remember the following couplet in allusion to the king himself:

'Perch'd on the eagle's soaring wing,
The lowly linnet loves to sing.'

Sir, he had heard something of the fabulous tale of the wren sitting upon the eagle's wing, and he had applied it to a linnet. Cibber's familiar style, however, was better than that which Whitehead has assumed. *Grand* nonsense is insupportable. Whitehead is but a little man to inscribe verses to *players*[1]."

I did not presume to controvert this censure, which was tinctured with his prejudice against players, but I could not help thinking that a dramatick poet might with propriety pay a compliment to an eminent performer, as Whitehead has very happily done in his verses to Mr. Garrick.

"Sir, I do not think Gray a first-rate poet. He has not a bold imagination, nor much command of words. The obscurity in which he has involved himself will not persuade us that he is sublime. His Elegy in a churchyard has a happy selection of

soon after went on the stage as an actor. In 1695 he appeared as a writer of comedies with great and deserved success. He quitted the stage in 1730, on being appointed poet laureate, and died in 1757. His *Memoirs of his own Life* is not only a very amusing collection of theatrical anecdotes, but shows considerable power of observation and delineation of character.—ED.]

[1] [This was a sneer aimed, it is to be feared, more at Garrick (to whom the verses were inscribed) than at Whitehead. William Whitehead, born about 1715, was the fashionable poet of a day, when Horace's exclusion of *mediocrity* was forgotten. He succeeded Cibber as laureate in 1757. He died in 1785. He must not be confounded with *Paul* Whitehead, no better poet, and a much less estimable man.—ED.]

images[1], but I don't like what are called his great things. His ode which begins

'Ruin seize thee, ruthless king,
Confusion on thy banners wait!'

has been celebrated for its abruptness, and plunging into the subject all at once. But such arts as these have no merit, unless when they are original. We admire them only once; and this abruptness has nothing new in it. We have had it often before. Nay, we have it in the old song of Johnny Armstrong:

'Is there ever a man in all Scotland,
From the highest estate to the lowest degree, &c.'

And then, sir,

'Yes, there is a man in Westmoreland,
And Johnny Armstrong they do him call.'

There, now, you plunge at once into the subject. You have no previous narration to lead you to it.—The two next lines in that ode are, I think, very good:

'Though fann'd by conquest's crimson wing,
They mock the air with idle state.'[2]

Here let it be observed, that although his opinion of Gray's poetry was widely different from mine, and I believe from that of most men of taste, by whom it is with justice highly admired, there is certainly much absurdity in the clamour which has been raised, as if he had been culpably injurious to the merit of that bard, and had been actuated by envy. Alas! ye little short-sighted criticks, could Johnson be envious of the talents of any of his contemporaries[3]? That his

[1] [And surely a happy selection of *expressions*. What does it then want? As to the criticism and quotations which follow, they might be pardonable in loose conversation; but Johnson, unluckily for his own reputation, has preserved them in his criticism on Gray, in the *Lives of the Poets*.—ED.]

[2] My friend Mr. Malone, in his valuable comments on Shakspeare, has traced in that great poet the *disjecta membra* of these lines.—BOSWELL.

[3] [Even under the penalty of being called *little* and *short-sighted*, it is impossible not to give an affirmative answer to Mr. Boswell's interrogatory. The evidence of the envious disposition of this otherwise great and amiable man seems too frequent and too flagrant to be doubted.—ED.]

opinion on this subject was what in private and in publick, he uniformly expressed, regardless of what others might think, we may wonder, and perhaps regret; but it is shallow and unjust to charge him with expressing what he did not think.

Finding him in a placid humour, and wishing to avail myself of the opportunity which I fortunately had of consulting a sage, to hear whose wisdom, I conceived, in the ardour of youthful imagination, that men filled with a noble enthusiasm for intellectual improvement would gladly have resorted from distant lands; I opened my mind to him ingenuously, and gave him a little sketch of my life, to which he was pleased to listen with great attention.

I acknowledged, that though educated very strictly in the principles of religion, I had for some time been misled into a certain degree of infidelity; but that I was come now to a better way of thinking, and was fully satisfied of the truth of the Christian revelation, though I was not clear as to every point considered to be orthodox. Being at all times a curious examiner of the human mind, and pleased with an undisguised display of what had passed in it, he called to me with warmth, "Give me your hand; I have taken a liking to you." He then began to descant upon the force of testimony, and the little we could know of final causes; so that the objections of, why was it so? or why was it not so? ought not to disturb us: adding, that he himself had at one period been guilty of a temporary neglect of religion, but that it was not the result of argument, but mere absence of thought.

After having given credit to reports of his bigotry, I was agreeably surprised when he expressed the following very liberal sentiment, which has the additional value of obviating an objection to our holy religion, founded upon the discordant tenets of Christians

themselves: "For my part, sir, I think all Christians, whether papists or protestants, agree in the essential articles, and that their differences are trivial, and rather political than religious."

We talked of belief in ghosts. He said, "Sir, I make a distinction between what a man may experience by the mere strength of his imagination, and what imagination cannot possibly produce. Thus, suppose I should think that I saw a form, and heard a voice cry, 'Johnson, you are a very wicked fellow, and unless you repent you will certainly be punished;' my own unworthiness is so deeply impressed upon my mind, that I might *imagine* I thus saw and heard, and therefore I should not believe that an external communication had been made to me. But if a form should appear, and a voice should tell me that a particular man had died at a particular place, and a particular hour, a fact which I had no apprehension of, nor any means of knowing, and this fact, with all its circumstances, should afterwards be unquestionably proved, I should, in that case, be persuaded that I had supernatural intelligence imparted to me."

Here it is proper, once for all, to give a true and fair statement of Johnson's way of thinking upon the question, whether departed spirits are ever permitted to appear in this world, or in any way to operate upon human life. He has been ignorantly misrepresented as weakly credulous upon that subject; and therefore, though I feel an inclination to disdain and treat with silent contempt so foolish a notion concerning my illustrious friend, yet, as I find it has gained ground, it is necessary to refute it. The real fact then is, that Johnson had a very philosophical mind, and such a rational respect for testimony, as to make him submit his understanding to what was authentically proved, though he could not comprehend why it was so.

Being thus disposed, he was willing to inquire into the truth of any relation of supernatural agency, a general belief of which has prevailed in all nations and ages. But so far was he from being a dupe of implicit faith, that he examined the matter with a jealous attention, and no man was more ready to refute its falsehood when he had discovered it. Churchill, in his poem entitled "The Ghost," availed himself of the absurd credulity imputed to Johnson, and drew a caricature of him under the name of "Pomposo," representing him as one of the believers of the story of a ghost in Cock-lane, which, in the year 1762, had gained very general credit in London. Many of my readers, I am convinced, are to this hour under an impression that Johnson was thus foolishly deceived. It will therefore surprise[1] them a good deal when they are informed upon undoubted authority, that Johnson was one of those by whom the imposture was detected. The story had become so popular, that he thought it should be investigated; and in this research he was assisted by the Rev. Dr. Douglas, now Bishop of Salisbury, the great detector of impostures; who informs me, that after the gentlemen who went and examined into the evidence were satisfied of its falsity, Johnson wrote in their presence an account of it, which was published in the newspapers and Gentleman's Magazine, and undeceived the world[2].

[1] [No rational man doubted that inquiry would lead to detection; men only wondered that Dr. Johnson should so far give countenance to this flimsy imposition as to think a solemn inquiry necessary.—ED.]

[2] The account was as follows: "On the night of the 1st of February, many gentlemen, eminent for their rank and character, were, by the invitation of the Rev. Mr. Aldrich, of Clerkenwell, assembled at his house, for the examination of the noises supposed to be made by a departed spirit, for the detection of some enormous crime.

"About ten at night the gentlemen met in the chamber in which the girl, supposed to be disturbed by a spirit, had, with proper caution, been put to bed by several ladies. They sat rather more than an hour, and hearing nothing, went down stairs, when they interrogated the father of the girl, who denied, in the strongest terms, any knowledge or belief of fraud.

"The supposed spirit had before publickly promised, by an affirmative knock, that it would attend one of the gentlemen into the vault under the church of St.

Hawk. p. 437—440.

[Mr. Saunders Welch [1], his intimate friend, would have dissuaded him from his purpose of visiting this place, urging, that it would expose him to ridicule; but all his arguments had no effect. What Mr. Welch foretold, in his advice to Johnson, touching this imposture, was now verified: he was censured for his credulity; his wisdom was arraigned, and his religious opinions resolved into superstition.

Nor was this all: that facetious gentleman, Mr. Foote, who, upon the strength and success of his satirical vein in comedy, had assumed the name of the modern Aristophanes, and at his theatre had long entertained the town with caricatures of living persons, with all their singularities and weaknesses, thought that Johnson at this time was become a fit subject for ridicule, and that an exhibition of him in a drama written for the purpose, in which himself should represent Johnson, and in his mien, his garb, and his speech, should display all his comic powers, would yield him a golden harvest. Johnson was apprized of his intention; and gave Mr. Foote to understand,

John, Clerkenwell, where the body is deposited, and give a token of her presence there, by a knock upon her coffin; it was therefore determined to make this trial of the existence or veracity of the supposed spirit.

"While they were inquiring and deliberating, they were summoned into the girl's chamber by some ladies who were near her bed, and who had heard knocks and scratches. When the gentlemen entered, the girl declared that she felt the spirit like a mouse upon her back, and was required to hold her hands out of bed. From that time, though the spirit was very solemnly required to manifest its existence by appearance, by impression on the hand or body of any present, by scratches, knocks, or any other agency, no evidence of any preternatural power was exhibited.

"The spirit was then very seriously advertised, that the person to whom the promise was made of striking the coffin was then about to visit the vault, and that the performance of the promise was then claimed. The company at one o'clock went into the church, and the gentleman to whom the promise was made went with another into the vault. The spirit was solemnly required to perform its promise, but nothing more than silence ensued: the person supposed to be accused by the spirit then went down with several others, but no effect was perceived. Upon their return they examined the girl, but could draw no confession from her. Between two and three she desired and was permitted to go home with her father.

"It is, therefore, the opinion of the whole assembly, that the child has some art of making or counterfeiting a particular noise, and that there is no agency of any higher cause."

[1] [See *post*, February, 1778.—ED.]

that the licence under which he was permitted to entertain the town would not justify the liberties he was accustomed to take with private characters, and that if he persisted in his design, he would, by a severe chastisement of his representative on the stage, and in the face of the whole audience, convince the world, that, whatever were his infirmities, or even his foibles, they should not be made the sport of the publick, or the means of gain to any one of his profession. Foote, upon this intimation, had discretion enough to desist from his purpose. Johnson entertained no resentment against him, and they were ever after friends.] Hawk. p. 437—440.

Our conversation proceeded. "Sir," said he, "I am a friend to subordination, as most conducive to the happiness of society. There is a reciprocal pleasure in governing and being governed."

"Dr. Goldsmith is one of the first men we now have as an authour, and he is a very worthy man too. He has been loose in his principles, but he is coming right."

I mentioned Mallet's tragedy of "ELVIRA," which had been acted the preceding winter at Drury-lane, and that the honourable Andrew Erskine[1], Mr. Dempster[2], and myself, had joined in writing a

[1] [Third son of the fifth Earl of Kellie, born in 1736. He published some letters and poems, addressed to Mr. Boswell; and died in 1793.—ED.]

[2] [George Dempster, of Dunnichen, secretary to the Order of the Thistle. He was a man of talents and very agreeable manners. Burns mentions him more than once with eulogy: As Mr. Dempster lived a good deal in Johnson's society, the reader may be glad to see the following slip-shod but characteristic epitaph (communicated to me by Sir Walter Scott), which he made on himself when eighty-five, though (affecting, even at that age, to look forward to a still greater longevity) he supposes himself to have lived to 93.

"Pray for the soul
Of deceased George Dempster,
In his youth a great fool,
In his old age a gamester *.

* *Gamester*, Scotticè, may rhyme with *Dempster*. He, however, only played for trifles; indeed the whole is a mere *badinage*.—W. SCOTT.

pamphlet, entitled "Critical Strictures," against it. That the mildness of Dempster's disposition had, however, relented; and he had candidly said, "We have hardly a right to abuse this tragedy; for bad as it is, how vain should either of us be to write one not near so good." JOHNSON. "Why no, sir; this is not just reasoning. You *may* abuse a tragedy, though you cannot write one. You may scold a carpenter who has made you a bad table, though you cannot make a table. It is not your trade to make tables."

When I talked to him of the paternal estate to which I was heir, he said, "Sir, let me tell you, that to be a Scotch landlord, where you have a number of families dependent upon you, and attached to you, is, perhaps, as high a situation as humanity can arrive at. A merchant upon the 'Change of London, with a hundred thousand pounds, is nothing; an English

What you 're curious to know
On this tomb you shall see;—
Life's thread he let go
When just ninety-three.

So sound was his bottom,
His acquaintance all wondered
How old Nick had got him
Till he lived out the hundred.

To his money concerns
He paid little attention,
First selling his land,
Then pawning his pension.

But his precious time
He much better did manage;—
To the end of his line
From his earliest nonage,

He divided his hours
Into two equal parts,
And spent one-half in sleeping,
The other at *cartes* *.

Mr. Dempster was, for near thirty years, member for the Perth district of burghs. He was also an East India director. He died about 1790.—ED.]

[1] The Critical Review, in which Mallet himself sometimes wrote, characterised this pamphlet as "the crude efforts of envy, petulance, and self-conceit." Three being thus three epithets, we the three authours had a humorous contention how each should be appropriated.—BOSWELL.

* [The Scotch, in familiar life, retain many French words (tokens of their early intercourse with France), and among others *cartes* for *cards*.—ED.]

duke, with an immense fortune, is nothing: he has no tenants who consider themselves as under his patriarchal care, and who will follow him into the field upon an emergency."

His notion of the dignity of a Scotch landlord had been formed upon what he had heard of the highland chiefs; for it is long since a lowland landlord has been so curtailed in his feudal authority, that he has little more influence over his tenants than an English landlord; and of late years most of the highland chiefs have destroyed, by means too well known, the princely power which they once enjoyed.

He proceeded: "Your going abroad, sir, and breaking off idle habits, may be of great importance to you. I would go where there are courts and learned men. There is a great deal of Spain that has not been perambulated. I would have you go thither. A man of inferiour talents to yours may furnish us with useful observations upon that country." His supposing me, at that period of life, capable of writing an account of my travels that would deserve to be read, elated me not a little.

I appeal to every impartial reader whether this faithful detail of his frankness, complacency, and kindness to a young man, a stranger and a Scotchman, does not refute the unjust opinion of the harshness of his general demeanour. His occasional reproofs of folly, impudence, or impiety, and even the sudden sallies of his constitutional irritability of temper, which have been preserved for the poignancy of their wit, have produced that opinion among those who have not considered that such instances, though collected by Mrs. Piozzi into a small volume[1], and

[1] [Mr. Boswell, here and elsewhere, hints blame against Mrs. Piozzi for repeating Johnson's asperities. Any one who examines the two works will find that Boswell relates *ten times* as many as the lady. No one could honestly relate Johnson's conversation without giving such sallies.—Ed.]

read over in a few hours, were, in fact, scattered through a long series of years: years in which his time was chiefly spent in instructing and delighting mankind by his writings and conversation, in acts of piety to GOD, and good-will to men.

I complained to him that I had not yet acquired much knowledge; and asked his advice as to my studies. He said, "Don't talk of study now. I will give you a plan; but it will require some time to consider of it." "It is very good in you," I replied, "to allow me to be with you thus. Had it been foretold to me some years ago that I should pass an evening with the authour of the RAMBLER, how should I have exulted!" What I then expressed was sincerely from the heart. He was satisfied that it was, and cordially answered, "Sir, I am glad we have met. I hope we shall pass many evenings, and mornings too, together." We finished a couple of bottles of port, and sat till between one and two in the morning.

He wrote this year in the Critical Review the account of "Telemachus, a Mask," by the Reverend George Graham, of Eton College. The subject of this beautiful poem was particularly interesting to Johnson, who had much experience of "the conflict of opposite principles," which he describes as "The contention between pleasure and virtue, a struggle which will always be continued while the present system of nature shall subsist; nor can history or poetry exhibit mere than pleasure triumphing over virtue, and virtue subjugating pleasure."

As Dr. Oliver Goldsmith will frequently appear in this narrative, I shall endeavour to make my readers in some degree acquainted with his singular character. He was a native of Ireland, and a contemporary with Mr. Burke, at Trinity College, Dublin, but did not

then give much promise of future celebrity[1]. He, however, observed to Mr. Malone, that, "though he made no great figure in mathematicks, which was a study in much repute there, he could turn an ode of Horace into English better than any of them." He afterwards studied physick at Edinburgh, and upon the continent; and, I have been informed, was enabled to pursue his travels on foot, partly by demanding at Universities to enter the lists as a disputant, by which, according to the custom of many of them, he was entitled to the premium of a crown, when luckily for him his challenge was not accepted; so that, as I once observed to Dr. Johnson, he *disputed* his passage through Europe. He then came to England, and was employed successively in the capacities of an usher to an academy, a corrector of the press, a reviewer, and a writer for a newspaper. He had sagacity enough to cultivate assiduously the acquaintance of Johnson, and his faculties were gradually enlarged by the contemplation of such a model. To me and many others it appeared that he studiously copied the manner of Johnson, though, indeed, upon a smaller scale.

At this time I think he had published nothing with his name, though it was pretty generally known that *one Dr. Goldsmith* was the authour of "An Inquiry into the present State of polite Learning in Europe," and of "The Citizen of the World," a series of letters supposed to be written from London by a

[1] Goldsmith got a premium at a Christmas examination in Trinity College, Dublin, which I have seen.—KEARNEY.

A premium obtained at the Christmas examination is generally more honourable than any other, because it ascertains the person who receives it to be the first in literary merit. At the other examinations, the person thus distinguished may be only the second in merit; he who has previously obtained the same honorary reward sometimes receiving a written certificate that *he* was the best answerer, it being a rule that not more than one premium should be adjudged to the same person in one year. See *ante*, p. 306.—MALONE.

Chinese[1]. No man had the art of displaying with more advantage, as a writer, whatever literary acquisitions he made. "*Nihil quod tetigit non ornavit*[2]." His mind resembled a fertile, but thin soil. There was a quick, but not a strong vegetation, of whatever chanced to be thrown upon it. No deep root could be struck. The oak of the forest did not grow there: but the elegant shrubbery and the fragrant parterre appeared in gay succession. It has been generally circulated and believed that he was a mere fool in conversation[3]; but, in truth, this has been greatly exaggerated. He has, no doubt, a more than common share of that hurry of ideas which we often find in his countrymen, and which sometimes produces a laughable confusion in expressing them. He was very much what the French call *un etourdi*, and from vanity and an eager desire of being conspicuous wherever he was, he frequently talked carelessly without knowledge of the subject, or even without thought. His person was short, his countenance coarse and vulgar, his deportment that of a scholar awkwardly affecting the easy gentleman. Those who were in any way distinguished excited envy in him to so ridiculous an excess, that the instances of it are hardly credible. When accompanying two

[1] He had also published, in 1759, "The BEE, being essays on the most interesting subjects."—MALONE.

[2] See his epitaph in Westminster Abbey, written by Dr. Johnson.—BOSWELL.

[3] In allusion to this, Mr. Horace Walpole, who admired his writings, said he was "an inspired idiot;" and Garrick described him as one

> "——————— for shortness call'd Noll,
> Who wrote like an angel, and talk'd like poor Poll."

Sir Joshua Reynolds mentioned to me that he frequently heard Goldsmith talk warmly of the pleasure of being liked, and observe how hard it would be if literary excellence should preclude a man from that satisfaction, which he perceived it often did, from the envy which attended it; and therefore Sir Joshua was convinced that he was intentionally more absurd, in order to lessen himself in social intercourse, trusting that his character would be sufficiently supported by his works. If it indeed was his intention to appear absurd in company, he was often very successful. But with due deference to Sir Joshua's ingenuity, I think the conjecture too refined.—BOSWELL.

beautiful young ladies[1] with their mother on a tour in France, he was seriously angry that more attention was paid to them than to him; and once at the exhibition of the *Fantoccini* in London, when those who sat next him observed with what dexterity a puppet was made to toss a pike, he could not bear that it should have such praise, and exclaimed with some warmth, "Pshaw! I can do it better myself[2]!"

[He affected Johnson's style and manner of conversation, and, when he had uttered, as he often would, a laboured sentence, so tumid as to be scarce intelligible, would ask, if that was not truly Johnsonian; yet he loved not Johnson, but rather envied him for his parts; and once entreated a friend to desist from praising him, "for in doing so," said he, "you harrow up my very soul." Hawk. p. 416—420.

He had some wit, but no humour, and never told a story but he spoiled it. The following anecdotes

[1] Miss Hornecks, one of whom is now married to Henry Bunbury, esq. and the other to Colonel Gwyn.—Boswell.

[2] He went home with Mr. Burke to supper; and broke his shin by attempting to exhibit to the company how much better he could jump over a stick than the puppets.—Boswell. [Colonel O'Moore, of Cloghan Castle in Ireland, told the Editor an amusing instance of the mingled vanity and simplicity of Goldsmith, which (though perhaps coloured a little, as *anecdotes* too often are) is characteristic at least of the opinion which his best friends entertained of Goldsmith. One afternoon, as Colonel O'Moore and Mr. Burke were going to dine with Sir Joshua Reynolds, they observed Goldsmith (also on his way to Sir Joshua's) standing near a crowd of people, who were staring and shouting at some foreign women in the windows of one of the houses in Leicester-square. "Observe Goldsmith," said Mr. Burke to O'Moore, "and mark what passes between him and me by-and-by at Sir Joshua's." They passed on, and arrived before Goldsmith, who came soon after, and Mr. Burke affected to receive him very coolly. This seemed to vex poor Goldsmith, who begged Mr. Burke would tell him how he had had the misfortune to offend him. Burke appeared very reluctant to speak, but, after a good deal of pressing, said, "that he was really ashamed to keep up an intimacy with one who could be guilty of such monstrous indiscretions as Goldsmith had just exhibited in the square." Goldsmith, with great earnestness, protested he was unconscious of what was meant: "Why," said Burke, "did you not exclaim, as you were looking up at those women, what stupid beasts the crowd must be for staring with such admiration at those *painted jezabels;* while a man of your talents passed by unnoticed?" Goldsmith was horror-struck, and said, "Surely, surely, my dear friend, I did not say so?" "Nay," replied Burke, "if you had not said so, how should I have known it?" "That's true," answered Goldsmith, with great humility: "I am very sorry—it was very foolish: *I do recollect that something of the kind passed through my mind, but I did not think I had uttered it.*"—Ed.]

Hawk. p. 416—420.

will convey some idea of the style and manner of his conversation:

He was used to say he could play on the German-flute as well as most men;—at other times, as well as any man living; and in his poem of the Traveller, has hinted at this attainment; but, in truth, he understood not the character in which musick is written, and played on that instrument, as many of the vulgar do, merely by ear. Roubiliac, the sculptor, a merry fellow, once heard him play, and minding to put a trick on him, pretended to be so charmed with his performance, that he entreated him to repeat the air, that he might write it down. Goldsmith readily consenting, Roubiliac called for paper, and scored thereon a few five-lined staves, which having done, Goldsmith proceeded to play, and Roubiliac to write; but his writing was only such random notes on the lines and spaces as any one might set down who had ever inspected a page of musick. When they had both done, Roubiliac showed the paper to Goldsmith, who, looking it over with seeming great attention, said it was very correct, and that if he had not seen him do it, he never could have believed his friend capable of writing musick after him.

He would frequently preface a story thus: "I'll now tell you a story of myself, which some people laugh at, and some do not."

At the breaking up of an evening at a tavern, he entreated the company to sit down, and told them if they would call for another bottle, they should hear one of his bon-mots. They agreed, and he began thus: "I was once told that Sheridan, the player, in order to improve himself in stage gestures, had looking-glasses, to the number of ten, hung about his room, and that he practised before them;

upon which I said, then there were ten ugly fellows together." The company were all silent. He asked, why they did not laugh? which, they not doing, he, without tasting the wine, left the room in anger. Hawk. p. 416 —420.

He once complained to a friend in these words: "Mr. Martinelli is a rude man; I said, in his hearing, that there were no good writers among the Italians, and he said to one that sat near him, that I was very ignorant."

"People," said he, "are greatly mistaken in me. A notion goes about, that when I am silent, I mean to be impudent; but I assure you, gentlemen, my silence arises from bashfulness."

Sir John Hawkins having one day a call to wait on the late duke, then earl, of Northumberland, found Goldsmith waiting for an audience in an outer room. Hawkins asked what had brought him there: he replied, an invitation from his lordship. Hawkins made his business as short as he could, and, as a reason, mentioned, that Dr. Goldsmith was waiting without. The earl asked if he was acquainted with him. He told him he was, adding what he thought likely to recommend him. Hawkins retired, and staid in the outer room to take Goldsmith home, and, upon his coming out, asked him the result of his conversation. "His lordship," says he, "told me he had read my poem (meaning the Traveller), and was much delighted with it; that he was going Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and that, hearing that I was a native of that country, he should be glad to do me any kindness." "And what did you answer," asked Hawkins, "to this gracious offer?" "Why," said he, "I could say nothing, but that I had a brother there, a clergyman, that stood in need of help. As for myself, I have no dependence on the promises of great men; I look to the booksellers for support; they are my

Hawk. p. 416—420.

best friends, and I am not inclined to forsake them for others."

Thus, adds Hawkins, did this idiot[1], in the affairs of the world, trifle with his fortunes, and put back the hand that was held out to assist him! Other offers of a like kind he either rejected or failed to improve, contenting himself with the patronage of one nobleman [Nugent, Lord Clare], whose mansion afforded him the delights of a splendid table, and a retreat for a few days from the metropolis.

While Hawkins was writing the History of Musick, Goldsmith, at the club, communicated to him some curious matter, which the former desired he would reduce to writing; he promised to do so, and desired to see Hawkins at his chambers. He called on him there; Goldsmith stepped into a closet, and tore out of a printed book six leaves that contained what he had mentioned.

His poems are replete with fine moral sentiments, and bespeak a great dignity of mind; yet he had no sense of the shame, nor dread of the evils, of poverty.]

He, I am afraid, had no settled system of any sort, so that his conduct must not be strictly scrutinized: but his affections were social and generous, and when he had money he gave it away very liberally. His desire of imaginary consequence predominated over his attention to truth. When he began to rise into notice, he said he had a brother who was Dean of Durham[2], a fiction so easily detected, that it is wonderful how he should have been so inconsiderate as to hazard it. He boasted to me at this time of the power of his pen in commanding money, which I believe was true in a certain degree, though in the

[1] [It is hard on poor Goldsmith to be called an *idiot* for what, in another man, would have been applauded as disinterestedness and magnanimity.—ED.]

[2] I am willing to hope that there may have been some mistake as to this anecdote, though I had it from a dignitary of the church. Dr. Isaac Goldsmith, his near relation, was Dean of Cloyne in 1747.—BOSWELL.

instance he gave he was by no means correct. He told me that he had sold a novel for four hundred pounds. This was his "Vicar of Wakefield." But Johnson informed me, that he had made the bargain for Goldsmith, and the price was sixty pounds. "And, sir," said he, "a sufficient price too, when it was sold; for then the fame of Goldsmith had not been elevated, as it afterwards was, by his 'Traveller;' and the bookseller had such faint hopes of profit by his bargain, that he kept the manuscript by him a long time, and did not publish it till after the 'Traveller' had appeared. Then, to be sure, it was accidentally worth more money."

Mrs. Piozzi and Sir John Hawkins[1] have strangely mis-stated the history of Goldsmith's situation and Johnson's friendly interference, when this novel was sold. I shall give it authentically from Johnson's own exact narration: Piozzi, p. 119.

"I received one morning a message from poor Goldsmith that he was in great distress, and as it was not in his power to come to me, begging that I would come to him as soon as possible. I sent him a guinea, and promised to come to him directly. I accordingly went as soon as I was dressed, and found that his landlady had arrested him for his rent, at which he was in a violent passion. I perceived that he had already changed my guinea, and had got a bottle of madeira and a glass before him. I put the cork into the bottle, desired he would be calm, and began to talk to him of the means by which he might be extricated. He then told me that he had a novel

[1] [How Mr. Boswell, who affects such extreme accuracy, should say that Hawkins has *strangely mis-stated* this affair is very surprising; what Hawkins says (*Life*, p. 420), is merely that, under a pressing necessity, he wrote the Vicar of Wakefield, and sold it to Newberry for 40*l*. Hawkins's account is not in any respect inconsistent with Boswell's; and the difference between the prices stated, even if Hawkins be in error, is surely not sufficient to justify the charge of a *strange mis-statement*.—ED.]

ready for the press, which he produced to me. I looked into it, and saw its merit; told the landlady I should soon return, and having gone to a bookseller, sold it for sixty pounds. I brought Goldsmith the money, and he discharged his rent, not without rating his landlady in a high tone for having used him so ill[1]."

Here let me not forget the curious anecdote[2], referred to by Dr. Maxwell, which was related to me by Mr. Beauclerk, and which I shall endeavour to exhibit as well as I can in that gentleman's lively manner; and, in justice to him, it is proper to add, that Dr. Johnson told me I might rely both on the correctness of his memory, and the fidelity of his narrative. "When Madame de Boufflers[3] was first in

[1] It may not be improper to annex here Mrs. Piozzi's account of this transaction, in her own words, as a specimen of the *extreme inaccuracy* with which all her anecdotes of Dr. Johnson are related, or rather discoloured and *distorted*. "I have forgotten the year, but it could scarcely, I think, be later than 1765 or 1766, that he was *called abruptly from our house after dinner*, and returning *in about three hours*, said he had been with an enraged authour, whose landlady pressed him for payment within doors, while the bailiffs beset him without; that he was *drinking himself drunk* with madeira, to drown care, and fretting over a novel, which, when *finished*, was to be his *whole fortune*, but *he could not get it done for distraction*, nor could he step out of doors to offer it for sale. Mr. Johnson, therefore, sent away the bottle, and went to the bookseller, recommending the performance, and *desiring some immediate relief;* which when he brought back to the writer, *he called the woman of the house directly to partake of punch, and pass their time in merriment.*"—*Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson*, p. 119.—BOSWELL. [It is hardly fair to give this as a proof of Mrs. Piozzi's inaccuracy in *all* her anecdotes. We have seen some instances, and shall see more, in which Dr. Johnson, according even to Mr. Boswell's report, told an anecdote different ways, and how can we be sure that he did not do so in the present case? The greatest discrepancy between the two stories is the *time* of the day at which it happened; and, unluckily, the admitted fact of the *bottle of madeira* seems to render Mrs. Piozzi's version the more probable of the two. If, according to Mr. Boswell's account, Goldsmith had, *in the morning*, changed Johnson's charitable guinea for the purpose of getting a bottle of madeira, we cannot complain that Mrs. Piozzi represents him as "*drinking himself drunk with madeira;*" which Mr. Boswell thinks so violently inaccurate, as to deserve being marked in italics.—ED.]

[2] [Mr. Boswell had placed this anecdote under 1775: it is thought right to introduce it near the date of the event.—ED.]

[3] La Comtesse de Boufflers was the mistress of the Prince de Conti, and aspired to be his wife; she was a bel-esprit, and in that character thought it necessary to be an *Anglomane* and to visit England in the summer of 1763. Horace Walpole says of her, in a *letter to Montagu*, 17th May, 1763, "Madame de Boufflers will, I think, die a martyr to a taste (for seeing sights), which she fancied she had, and finds she had not. Never having stirred ten miles from Paris, and having only rolled in an easy coach from one hotel to another on a gliding

England (said Beauclerk), she was desirous to see Johnson. I accordingly went with her to his chambers in the Temple, where she was entertained with his conversation for some time. When our visit was over, she and I left him, and were got into Inner Temple-lane, when all at once I heard a noise like thunder. This was occasioned by Johnson, who, it seems, upon a little recollection, had taken it into his head that he ought to have done the honours of his literary residence to a foreign lady of quality, and, eager to show himself a man of gallantry, was hurrying down the staircase in violent agitation. He overtook us before we reached the Temple-gate, and, brushing in between me and Madame de Boufflers, seized her hand, and conducted her to her coach. His dress was a rusty brown morning suit, a pair of old shoes by way of slippers, a little shrivelled wig sticking on the top of his head, and the sleeves of his shirt and the knees of his breeches hanging loose. A considerable crowd of people gathered round, and were not a little struck by this singular appearance."

My next meeting with Johnson was on Friday, the 1st of July, when he and I and Dr. Goldsmith supped at the Mitre. I was before this time pretty well acquainted with Goldsmith, who was one of the brightest ornaments of the Johnsonian school[1]. Goldsmith's respectful attachment to Johnson was then at its height; for his own literary reputation had not

pavement, she is already worn out by being hurried from morning till night from one sight to another. She rises every morning so fatigued with the toils of the preceding day, that she has not strength, if she had inclination, to observe the *least* or the *finest* things she sees." One of the *sights*, which this inquisitive traveller was taken to see, was Dr. Johnson, and a strange sight it seems that it was. Madame de Boufflers visited England a second time on the melancholy necessity of the emigration.—ED.]

[1] [Mr. Boswell, as has been already observed, imagined that all the literary men in England were mere planets moving round and borrowing light from his great luminary, Johnson. Goldsmith was an ornament of *the Johnsonian society*; but in what respect can he be said to have belonged to the Johnsonian *school*? The style of his writings, the turn of his mind, the habits of his life, were, in almost every point, strikingly dissimilar from Johnson's.—ED.]

yet distinguished him so much as to excite a vain desire of competition with his great master. He had increased my admiration of the goodness of Johnson's heart, by incidental remarks in the course of conversation, such as, when I mentioned Mr. Levet, whom he entertained under his roof. "He is poor and honest, which is recommendation enough to Johnson;" and when I wondered that he was very kind to a man of whom I had heard a very bad character, "He is now become miserable, and that ensures the protection of Johnson."

Goldsmith attempted this evening to maintain, I suppose from an affectation of paradox, "that knowledge was not desirable on its own account, for it often was a source of unhappiness." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, that knowledge may in some cases produce unhappiness, I allow. But upon the whole, knowledge, *per se*, is certainly an object which every man would wish to attain, although, perhaps, he may not take the trouble necessary for attaining it."

Dr. John Campbell, the celebrated[1] political and biographical writer, being mentioned, Johnson said, "Campbell is a man of much knowledge, and has a good share of imagination. His 'Hermippus Redivivus' is very entertaining, as an account of the hermetick philosophy, and as furnishing a curious history of the extravagancies of the human mind. If it were merely imaginary, it would be nothing at all. Campbell is not always rigidly careful of truth in his conversation; but I do not believe there is any thing

[1] [Mr. Boswell a little exaggerates the literary station of his countryman, Dr. Campbell; who was, no doubt, an able, industrious, and very voluminous writer, but hardly can be designated as "*the celebrated.*" His *Lives of the Admirals* is the only one of his almost innumerable publications that is still called for; his last and most extensive work, "*A Political Survey of Britain*," published in 1774, has become, from the change of circumstances, almost obsolete, but at the time deserved more reputation than it obtained. He was born in 1708, and died in 1775.—Ed.]

of this carelessness in his books. Campbell is a good man, a pious man. I am afraid he has not been in the inside of a church for many years[1]; but he never passes a church without pulling off his hat. This shows that he has good principles. I used to go pretty often to Campbell's on a Sunday evening, till I began to consider that the shoals of Scotchmen who flocked about him might probably say, when any thing of mine was well done, 'Ay, ay, he has learnt this of CAWMELL!'"

He talked very contemptuously of Churchill's poetry, observing, that "it had a temporary currency, only from its audacity of abuse, and being filled with living names, and that it would sink into oblivion." I ventured to hint that he was not quite a fair judge, as Churchill had attacked him violently. JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, I am a very fair judge. He did not attack me violently till he found I did not like his poetry; and his attack on me shall not prevent me from continuing to say what I think of him, from an apprehension that it may be ascribed to resent-

[1] I am inclined to think that he was misinformed as to this circumstance. I own I am jealous for my worthy friend Dr. John Campbell. For though Milton could without remorse absent himself from public worship, I cannot. On the contrary, I have the same habitual impressions upon my mind, with those of a truly venerable judge, who said to Mr. Langton, "Friend Langton, if I have not been at church on Sunday, I do not feel myself easy." Dr. Campbell was a sincerely religious man. Lord Macartney, who is eminent for his variety of knowledge, and attention to men of talents, and knew him well, told me, that when he called on him in a morning, he found him reading a chapter in the Greek New Testament, which he informed his lordship was his constant practice. The quantity of Dr. Campbell's composition is almost incredible, and his labours brought him large profits. Dr. Joseph Warton told me that Johnson said of him, "He is the richest authour that ever grazed the common of literature." [Mr. Boswell quotes this *dictum* as if it was evidence only of Dr. Campbell's *wealth*; he probably did not see that it characterised his *celebrated* friend, by no very complimentary allusion, as *grazing the common* of literature. The strange story of Campbell's "pulling off his hat whenever he *passed* a church, though he had not been for many years *inside* one," must have arisen from some error. Johnson could hardly have seriously told such an absurdity. It is well known, that the members of the kirk of Scotland do not think it necessary to uncover on entering places of worship, though the lower classes sometimes show a kind of superstitious veneration for burial-places: perhaps Dr. Campbell may, in conversation with Johnson, have alluded to those circumstances, and thus given occasion to this whimsical misapprehension. —ED.]

ment. No, sir, I called the fellow a blockhead at first, and I will call him a blockhead still. However, I will acknowledge that I have a better opinion of him now than I once had; for he has shown more fertility than I expected. To be sure, he is a tree that cannot produce good fruit: he only bears crabs. But, sir, a tree that produces a great many crabs is better than a tree which produces only a few."

In this depreciation of Churchill's poetry I could not agree with him. It is very true that the greatest part of it is upon the topicks of the day, on which account, as it brought him great fame and profit at the time, it must proportionably slide out of the publick attention as other occasional objects succeed. But Churchill had extraordinary vigour both of thought and expression. His portraits of the players will ever be valuable to the true lovers of the drama; and his strong caricatures of several eminent men of his age will not be forgotten by the curious. Let me add, that there are in his works many passages which are of a general nature; and his "Prophecy of Famine" is a poem of no ordinary merit. It is, indeed, falsely injurious to Scotland; but therefore may be allowed a greater share of invention.

Bonnell Thornton had just published a burlesque "Ode on St. Cecilia's Day," adapted to the ancient British musick, viz. the salt-box, the jew's-harp, the marrow-bones and cleaver, the hum-strum or hurdy-gurdy, &c. Johnson praised its humour, and seemed much diverted with it. He repeated the following passage:

> "In strains more exalted the salt-box shall join,
> And clattering and battering and clapping combine;
> With a rap and a tap, while the hollow side sounds,
> Up and down leaps the flap, and with rattling rebounds[1]."

[1] In 1769 I set for Smart and Newbury, Thornton's burlesque Ode on St Cecilia's day. It was performed at Ranelagh in masks, to a very crowded audi-

I mentioned the periodical paper called "The Connoisseur." He said it wanted matter.—No doubt it had not the deep thinking of Johnson's writings. But surely it has just views of the surface of life, and a very sprightly manner. His opinion of The World was not much higher than of the Connoisseur.

Let me here apologize for the imperfect manner in which I am obliged to exhibit Johnson's conversation at this period. In the early part of my acquaintance with him, I was so wrapt in admiration of his extraordinary colloquial talents, and so little accustomed to his peculiar mode of expression, that I found it extremely difficult to recollect and record his conversation with its genuine vigour and vivacity. In progress of time, when my mind was, as it were, *strongly impregnated with the Johnsonian æther*, I could, with much more facility and exactness, carry in my memory and commit to paper the exuberant variety of his wisdom and wit.

At this time *Miss* Williams, as she was then called, though she did not reside with him in the Temple under his roof, but had lodgings in Bolt-court, Fleet-street, had so much of his attention, that he every night drank tea with her before he went home, however late it might be, and she always sat up for him. This, it may be fairly conjectured, was not alone a proof of his regard for *her*, but of his own unwillingness to go into solitude, before that unsea-

ence, as I was told; for I then resided in Norfolk. Beard sung the salt-box song, which was admirably accompanied on that instrument by Brent, the fencing-master, and father of Miss Brent, the celebrated singer; Skeggs on the broomstick, as bassoon; and a remarkable performer on the jew's-harp,—"Buzzing twangs the iron lyre." Cleavers were cast in bell-metal for this entertainment. All the performers of the old woman's oratory, employed by Foote, were, I believe, employed at Ranelagh, on this occasion.—BURNEY.
[In the original edition of this ode now before the editor, the date on the title-page is 1749, a mistake, no doubt, for 1769. For the use to which Dr. Burney put it, as a burlesque vehicle for music, it is very well; but as a literary production, it seems without object or meaning. It has not even the low merit of being a parody; the best line is that on the jew's-harp, above quoted—"Buzzing twangs the iron lyre.—ED.]

sonable hour at which he had habituated himself to expect the oblivion of repose. Dr. Goldsmith, being a privileged man, went with him this night, strutting away, and calling to me with an air of superiority, like that of an esoterick over an exoterick disciple of a sage of antiquity[1], "I go to Miss Williams." I confess, I then envied him this mighty privilege, of which he seemed so proud; but it was not long before I obtained the same mark of distinction.

On Tuesday, the 5th of July, I again visited Johnson. He told me he had looked into the poems of a pretty voluminous writer, Mr. (now Dr.) John Ogilvie, one of the presbyterian ministers of Scotland, which had lately come out, but could find nothing in them. BOSWELL. "Is there not imagination in them, sir?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, there is in them what *was* imagination, but it is no more imagination in *him*, than sound is sound in the echo. And his diction too is not his own. We have long ago seen *white-robed innocence*, and *flower-bespangled meads*."

Talking of London, he observed, "Sir, if you wish to have a just notion of the magnitude of this city, you must not be satisfied with seeing its great streets and squares, but must survey the innumerable little lanes and courts. It is not in the showy evolutions of buildings, but in the multiplicity of human habitations which are crowded together, that the wonderful immensity of London consists."—I have often amused myself with thinking how different a place London is to different people. They, whose narrow minds are contracted to the consideration of some one particular pursuit, view it only through that medium. A politician thinks of it merely as the seat of govern-

[1] [It may perhaps not be unnecessary to some readers to explain that the ancient philosophers were supposed to have two sets of tenets—one, the *exoteric*, external, or public doctrines—the other the *esoteric*, the internal, or secret doctrine, which were reserved for the more favoured few.—ED.]

ment in its different departments; a grazier, as a vast market for cattle; a mercantile man, as a place where a prodigious deal of business is done upon 'Change; a dramatick enthusiast, as the grand scene of theatrical entertainments; a man of pleasure, as an assemblage of taverns, and the great emporium for ladies of easy virtue. But the intellectual man is struck with it, as comprehending the whole of human life in all its variety, the contemplation of which is inexhaustible.

["DR. JOHNSON TO MISS LUCY PORTER. Pearson MSS.

"5th July, 1763.

"MY DEAREST DEAR,—I am extremely glad that so much prudence and virtue as yours is at last rewarded with so large a fortune[1], and doubt not but that the excellence which you have shown in circumstances of difficulty will continue the same in the convenience of wealth.

"I have not written to you sooner, having nothing to say, which you would not easily suppose,—nothing but that I love you and wish you happy, of which you may be always assured, whether I write or not.

"I have had an inflammation in my eyes, but it is much better, and will be, I hope, soon quite well.

"Be so good as to let me know whether you design to stay at Lichfield this summer; if you do, I purpose to come down. I shall bring Frank with me, so that Kitty must contrive to make two beds, or get a servant's bed at the Three Crowns, which may be as well. As I suppose she may want sheets and table-linen, and such things, I have sent ten pounds, which she may lay out in conveniences. I will pay her for her board what you think proper; I think a guinea a week for me and the boy.

"Be pleased to give my love to Kitty.—I am, my dearest love, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

On Wednesday, July 6, he was engaged to sup with me at my lodgings in Downing-street, Westminster. But on the preceding night my landlord having behaved very rudely to me and some company who were

[1] [Miss Porter had just received a legacy of 10,000*l.* by the death of her brother.—ED.]

with me, I had resolved not to remain another night in his house. I was exceedingly uneasy at the awkward appearance I supposed I should make to Johnson and the other gentlemen whom I had invited, not being able to receive them at home, and being obliged to order supper at the Mitre: I went to Johnson in the morning, and talked of it as of a serious distress. He laughed, and said, "Consider, sir, how insignificant this will appear a twelvemonth hence." Were this consideration to be applied to most of the little vexatious incidents of life, by which our quiet is too often disturbed, it would prevent many painful sensations. I have tried it frequently with good effect. "There is nothing (continued he) in this mighty misfortune; nay, we shall be better at the Mitre." I told him that I had been at Sir John Fielding's office, complaining of my landlord, and had been informed, that though I had taken my lodgings for a year, I might, upon proof of his bad behaviour, quit them when I pleased, without being under an obligation to pay rent for any longer time than while I possessed them. The fertility of Johnson's mind could show itself even upon so small a matter as this. "Why, sir (said he), I suppose this must be the law, since you have been told so in Bow-street. But, if your landlord could hold you to your bargain, and the lodgings should be yours for a year, you may certainly use them as you think fit[1]. So, sir, you may quarter two life-guardmen upon him; or you may send the greatest scoundrel you can find into your apartments; or you may say that you want to make some experiments in natural philosophy, and may burn a large quantity of assafœtida in his house."

[1] [Certainly not; you must use them according to the contract, expressed or implied, under which you have hired them. If a landlord breaks his part of the contract, the law will relieve the other party; but the latter is not at liberty to take such violent and illegal steps as Johnson suggests.—ED.]

I had as my guests this evening at the Mitre tavern, Dr. Johnson, Dr. Goldsmith, Mr. Thomas Davies, Mr. Eccles[1], an Irish gentleman, for whose agreeable company I was obliged to Mr. Davies, and the Reverend Mr. John Ogilvie[2], who was desirous of being in company with my illustrious friend, while I, in my turn, was proud to have the honour of showing one of my countrymen upon what easy terms Johnson permitted me to live with him.

Goldsmith, as usual, endeavoured, with too much eagerness, to *shine*, and disputed very warmly with Johnson against the well known maxim of the British constitution, "the king can do no wrong;" affirming, that "what was morally false could not be politically true; and as the king might, in the exercise of his regal power, command and cause the doing of what was wrong, it certainly might be said, in sense and in reason, that he could do wrong." JOHNSON. "Sir, you are to consider, that in our constitution, according to its true principles, the king is the head, he is supreme; he is above every thing, and there is no power by which he can be tried. Therefore it is, sir, that we hold the king can do no wrong; that whatever may happen to be wrong in government may not be above our reach, by being ascribed to majesty. Redress is always to be had against oppression, by punishing the immediate agents. The king, though he should command, cannot force a judge to condemn a man unjustly; therefore it is

[1] [Isaac Ambrose Eccles, Esq. of Cronroe, in the county of Wicklow, in Ireland: he published one or two plays of Shakspeare, with notes.—ED.]

[2] The northern bard mentioned page 434. When I asked Dr. Johnson's permission to introduce him, he obligingly agreed; adding, however, with a sly pleasantry, "but he must give us none of his poetry." It is *remarkable* that Johnson and Churchill, however much they differed in other points, agreed on this subject. See Churchill's "Journey." It is, however, but justice to Dr. Ogilvie to observe, that his "Day of Judgment" has no inconsiderable share of merit.—BOSWELL. [Boswell's *naiveté* in thinking it *remarkable* that two persons should agree in disliking the poetry of his *northern bard* is amusing: it might have been more remarkable if two had agreed in *liking* it.—ED.]

the judge whom we prosecute and punish. Political institutions are formed upon the consideration of what will most frequently tend to the good of the whole, although now and then exceptions may occur. Thus it is better in general that a nation should have a supreme legislative power, although it may at times be abused. And then, sir, there is this consideration, that *if the abuse be enormous, Nature will rise up, and claiming her original rights, overturn a corrupt political system.*" I mark this animated sentence with peculiar pleasure, as a noble instance of that truly dignified spirit of freedom which ever glowed in his heart, though he was charged with slavish tenets by superficial observers; because he was at all times indignant against that false patriotism, that pretended love of freedom, that unruly restlessness, which is inconsistent with the stable authority of any good government.

This generous sentiment, which he uttered with great fervour, struck me exceedingly, and stirred my blood to that pitch of fancied resistance, the possibility of which I am glad to keep in mind, but to which I trust I never shall be forced.

"Great abilities," said he, "are not requisite for an historian; for in historical composition, all the greatest powers of the human mind are quiescent. He has facts ready to his hand: so there is no exercise of invention. Imagination is not required in any high degree: only about as much as is used in the lower kinds of poetry. Some penetration, accuracy, and colouring, will fit a man for the task, if he can give the application which is necessary."

"Bayle's Dictionary is a very useful work for those to consult who love the biographical part of literature, which is what I love most."

Talking of the eminent writers in Queen Anne's

reign, he observed, "I think Dr. Arbuthnot the first man among them. He was the most universal genius, being an excellent physician, a man of deep learning, and a man of much humour. Mr. Addison was, to be sure, a great man: his learning was not profound; but his morality, his humour, and his elegance of writing, set him very high."

Mr. Ogilvie was unlucky enough to choose for the topick of his conversation the praises of his native country. He began with saying, that there was very rich land around Edinburgh. Goldsmith, who had studied physick there, contradicted this, very untruly, with a sneering laugh. Disconcerted a little by this, Mr. Ogilvie then took a new ground, where, I suppose, he thought himself perfectly safe; for he observed, that Scotland had a great many noble wild prospects. JOHNSON. "I believe, sir, you have a great many. Norway, too, has noble wild prospects; and Lapland is remarkable for prodigious noble wild prospects. But, sir, let me tell you, the noblest prospect which a Scotchman ever sees is the high road that leads him to England!" This unexpected and pointed sally produced a roar of applause. After all, however, those who admire the rude grandeur of nature cannot deny it to Caledonia. [Mrs. Brooke[1] received an answer not unlike this, when expatiating on the accumulation of sublime and beautiful objects, which form the fine prospect UP the river St. Lawrence in North America: "Come, madam (says Dr. Johnson), confess that nothing ever equalled your pleasure in seeing that sight reversed; and finding yourself looking at the happy prospect DOWN the river St.

Piozzi, p. 204.

[1] [Frances Moore, wife of the Rev. Mr. Brooke, chaplain to the forces in Canada, whither she accompanied him, and wrote a novel called *Emily Montague*. She afterwards produced several dramatic pieces, one of which, *Rosina*, still keeps the stage. She is said to have been much esteemed by Johnson. She died in 1789.—ED.]

Piozzi, p. 204, 205. Lawrence." The truth is, he hated to hear about prospects and views, and laying out ground, and taste in gardening: "That was the best garden (he said) which produced most roots and fruits; and that water was most to be prized which contained most fish." He used to laugh at Shenstone most unmercifully for not caring whether there was any thing good to *eat* in the streams he was so fond of. Walking in a wood when it rained, was, Mrs. Piozzi thought, the only rural image which pleased his fancy.

He loved the sight of fine forest-trees, however, and detested Brighthelmstone Downs, "because it was a country so truly desolate (he said), that if one had a mind to hang one's self for desperation at being obliged to live there, it would be difficult to find a tree on which to fasten the rope."

On Saturday, July 9, I found Johnson surrounded with a numerous levee, but have not preserved any part of his conversation.

Pearson MSS. ["DR. JOHNSON TO MISS LUCY PORTER.

"12th July, 1763.

"MY DEAREST LOVE,—I had forgot my debt to poor Kitty; pray let her have the note, and do what you can for her, for she has been always very good. I will help her to a little more money if she wants it, and will write. I intend that she shall have the use of the house as long as she and I live.

"That there should not be room for me at the house is some disappointment to me, but the matter is not very great. I am sorry you have had your head filled with building[1] for many reasons.

"It was not necessary to settle immediately for life at any one place; you might have staid and seen more of the world.

"You will not have your work done, as you do not understand it, but at twice the value.

"You might have hired a house at half the interest of the money for which you build it, if your house cost you a thousand pounds. You might have the Palace for twenty pounds, and

[1] [Miss Porter laid out nearly one-third of her legacy in building a handsome house at Lichfield.—ED.]

make forty of your thousand pounds; so in twenty years you would have saved forty pounds, and still have had your thousand. I am, dear dear, yours, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."]

On the 14th we had another evening by ourselves at the Mitre. It happening to be a very rainy night, I made some common-place observations on the relaxation of nerves and depression of spirits which such weather occasioned[1]; adding, however, that it was good for the vegetable creation. Johnson, who, as we have already seen[2], denied that the temperature of the air had any influence on the human frame, answered, with a smile of ridicule, "Why, yes, sir, it is good for vegetables, and for the animals who eat those vegetables, and for the animals who eat those animals." This observation of his aptly enough introduced a good supper; and I soon forgot, in Johnson's company, the influence of a moist atmosphere.

[Though Dr. Johnson owed his very life to air and exercise, given him when his organs of respiration could scarcely play, in the year 1766, yet he ever persisted in the notion, that neither of them had any thing to do with health. "People live as long," said he, "in Pepper-alley as on Salisbury-plain; and they live so much happier, that an inhabitant of the first would, if he turned cottager, starve his understanding for want of conversation, and perish in a state of mental inferiority."] Piozzi, p. 160.

Feeling myself now quite at ease as his companion, though I had all possible reverence for him, I ex-

[1] Johnson would suffer none of his friends to fill up chasms in conversation with remarks on the weather: "Let us not talk of the weather."—BURNEY. [The French, who rally us for talking of the weather, have a proverbial saying, which shows that they are also driven to the same resource—to describe an idle conversation they say, "*Parler de la pluie et du beau temps.*" One may here also remark another little inconsistency of our neighbours on this point—they make themselves merry with our English fogs, protesting that there is no such thing in France. Yet, when they made their descriptive revolutionary calendar, they denominated one month *Brumaire*. A Cockney could not have told a severer truth of his own climate.—ED.]

[2] [See *ante*, p. 318.—ED.]

pressed a regret that I could not be so easy with my father, though he was not much older than Johnson, and certainly however respectable had not more learning and greater abilities to depress me. I asked him the reason of this. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, I am a man of the world. I live in the world, and I take, in some degree, the colour of the world as it moves along. Your father is a judge in a remote part of the island, and all his notions are taken from the old world. Besides, sir, there must always be a struggle between a father and a son, while one aims at power and the other at independence." I said I was afraid my father would force me to be a lawyer. JOHNSON. "Sir, you need not be afraid of his forcing you to be a laborious practising lawyer; that is not in his power. For as the proverb says, 'One man may lead a horse to the water, but twenty cannot make him drink.' He may be displeased that you are not what he wishes you to be; but that displeasure will not go far. If he insists only on your having as much law as is necessary for a man of property, and then endeavours to get you into parliament, he is quite in the right."

He enlarged very convincingly upon the excellence of rhyme over blank verse in English poetry. I mentioned to him that Dr. Adam Smith, in his lectures upon composition, when I studied under him in the college of Glasgow, had maintained the same opinion strenuously, and I repeated some of his arguments. JOHNSON. "Sir, I was once[1] in company with Smith, and we did not take to each other; but had I known that he loved rhyme as much as you tell me he does, I should have HUGGED him."

[1] [Adam Smith was admitted to THE CLUB on the 1st December, 1775, which, all things considered, would have appeared remarkable enough; but on inquiry of Mr. Hatchett, now treasurer of that society, he informs me, that the members present on that evening were only Messrs. Beauclerk, Jones, Gibbon, and Sir J. Reynolds. Dr. Barnard was admitted at the same time. Johnson was probably at Streatham. In 1777 it was resolved that not less than *seven* should make a quorum, which is still the rule.—ED.]

Talking of those who denied the truth of Christianity, he said, "It is always easy to be on the negative side. If a man were now to deny that there is salt upon the table, you could not reduce him to an absurdity. Come, let us try this a little further. I deny that Canada is taken, and I can support my denial by pretty good arguments. The French are a much more numerous people than we; and it is not likely that they would allow us to take it. 'But the ministry have assured us, in all the formality of the Gazette, that it is taken.' Very true. But the ministry have put us to an enormous expense by the war in America, and it is their interest to persuade us that we have got something for our money. 'But the fact is confirmed by thousands of men who were at the taking of it.' Ay, but these men have still more interest in deceiving us. They don't want that you should think the French have beat them, but that they have beat the French. Now suppose you should go over and find that it really is taken, that would only satisfy yourself; for when you come home we will not believe you. We will say, you have been bribed. Yet, sir, notwithstanding all these plausible objections, we have no doubt that Canada is really ours. Such is the weight of common testimony. How much stronger are the evidences of the Christian religion!"

"Idleness is a disease which must be combated; but I would not advise a rigid adherence to a particular plan of study[1]. I myself have never persisted in any plan for two days together. A man ought to read just as inclination leads him: for what he reads as a task will do him little good. A young man should read five hours in a day, and so may acquire a great deal of knowledge."

[1] [See *post*, his letter to Mr. George Strahan, 25th May, 1765.—ED.]

To a man of vigorous intellect and ardent curiosity like his own, reading without a regular plan may be beneficial; though even such a man must submit to it, if he would attain a full understanding of any of the sciences[1].

To such a degree of unrestrained frankness had he now accustomed me, that in the course of this evening I talked of the numerous reflections which had been thrown out against him on account of his having accepted a pension from his present majesty. "Why, sir," said he, with a hearty laugh, "it is a mighty foolish noise that they make[2]. I have accepted of a pension as a reward which has been thought due to my literary merit; and now that I have this pension, I am the same man in every respect that I have ever been; I retain the same principles. It is true, that I cannot now curse (smiling) the house of Hanover; nor would it be decent for me to drink King James's health in the wine that King George gives me money to pay for. But, sir, I think that the pleasure of cursing the house of Hanover, and drinking King James's health, are amply overbalanced by three hundred pounds a year."

There was here, most certainly, an affectation of more Jacobitism than he really had; and indeed an intention of admitting, for the moment, in a much greater extent than it really existed, the charge of disaffection imputed to him by the world, merely for the purpose of showing how dexterously he could repel an attack, even though he were placed in the most disadvantageous position; for I have heard him declare, that if holding up his right hand would have secured victory at Culloden to Prince Charles's army,

[1] [See *ante*, p. 28.—ED.]

[2] When I mentioned the same idle clamour to him several years afterwards, he said, with a smile, "I wish my pension were twice as large, that they might make twice as much noise."—BOSWELL.

he was not sure he would have held it up; so little confidence had he in the right claimed by the house of Stuart, and so fearful was he of the consequences of another revolution on the throne of Great Britain; and Mr. Topham Beauclerk assured me, he had heard him say this before he had his pension. At another time he said to Mr. Langton, "Nothing has ever offered, that has made it worth my while to consider the question fully." He, however, also said to the same gentleman, talking of King James the Second, "It was become impossible for him to reign any longer in this country." He no doubt had an early attachment to the house of Stuart; but his zeal had cooled as his reason strengthened. Indeed I heard him once say, "that after the death of a violent whig, with whom he used to contend with great eagerness, he felt his toryism much abated." I suppose he meant Mr. Walmsley[1].

Yet there is no doubt that at earlier periods he was wont often to exercise both his pleasantry and ingenuity in talking Jacobitism. My much respected friend, Dr. Douglas, now Bishop of Salisbury, has favoured me with the following admirable instance from his lordship's own recollection. One day when dining at old Mr. Langton's, where Miss Roberts, his niece, was one of the company, Johnson, with his usual complacent attention to the fair sex, took her by the hand, and said, "My dear, I hope you are a Jacobite." Old Mr. Langton, who, though a high and steady tory, was attached to the present royal family, seemed offended, and asked Johnson, with great warmth, what he could mean by putting such

[1] [It seems unlikely that he and Mr. Walmesley could have had much intercourse since Johnson removed to London, in 1736: it was more probably some member of the Ivy-lane club, Dyer, M'Ghie, or Barker, whose political and religious tenets were what Johnson would have called whiggish.—Ed.]

a question to his niece? "Why, sir (said Johnson), I meant no offence to your niece, I meant her a great compliment. A Jacobite, sir, believes in the divine right of kings. He that believes in the divine right of kings believes in a divinity. A Jacobite believes in the divine right of bishops. He that believes in the divine right of bishops believes in the divine authority of the Christian religion. Therefore, sir, a Jacobite is neither an atheist nor a deist. That cannot be said of a whig; for *whiggism is a negation of all principle*[1]."

He advised me, when abroad, to be as much as I could with the professors in the universities, and with the clergy; for from their conversation I might expect the best accounts of every thing in whatever country I should be, with the additional advantage of keeping my learning alive.

It will be observed, that when giving me advice as to my travels, Dr. Johnson did not dwell upon cities, and palaces, and pictures, and shows, and Arcadian scenes. He was of Lord Essex's[2] opinion, who advises his kinsman Roger Earl of Rutland, "rather to go a hundred miles to speak with one wise man, than five miles to see a fair town[3]."

I described to him an impudent fellow from Scotland, who affected to be a savage, and railed at all established systems. JOHNSON. "There is nothing surprising in this, sir. He wants to make himself conspicuous. He would tumble in a hogsty, as long as you looked at him and called to him to come out.

[1] He used to tell, with great humour, from my relation to him, the following little story of my early years, which was literally true: "Boswell, in the year 1745, was a fine boy, wore a white cockade, and prayed for King James, till one of his uncles (General Cochran) gave him a shilling on condition that he would pray for King George, which he accordingly did. So you see (says Boswell) that *whigs of all ages are made the same way.*"—BOSWELL.

[2] [The celebrated and unfortunate Earl of Essex.—ED.]

[3] Letter to Rutland on Travel, 16mo. 1596.—BOSWELL.

But let him alone, never mind him, and he 'll soon give it over."

I added that the same person maintained that there was no distinction between virtue and vice. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, if the fellow does not think as he speaks, he is lying; and I see not what honour he can propose to himself from having the character of a liar. But if he does really think that there is no distinction between virtue and vice, why, sir, when he leaves our houses, let us count our spoons."

Sir David Dalrymple[1], now one of the judges of Scotland by the title of Lord Hailes, had contributed much to increase my high opinion of Johnson, on account of his writings, long before I attained to a personal acquaintance with him; I, in return, had informed Johnson of Sir David's eminent character for learning and religion; and Johnson was so much pleased, that at one of our evening meetings he gave him for his toast. I at this time kept up a very frequent correspondence with Sir David; and I read to Dr. Johnson to-night the following passage from the letter which I had last received from him:

"It gives me pleasure to think that you have obtained the friendship of Mr. Samuel Johnson. He is one of the best moral writers which England has produced. At the same time, I envy you the free and undisguised converse with such a man. May I beg you to present my best respects to him, and to assure him of the veneration which I entertain for the authour of the Rambler and of Rasselas? Let me recommend this last work to you; with the Rambler you certainly are acquainted. In Rasselas

[1] [This learned and excellent person was born in 1726; educated at Eton, and afterwards at Utrecht; called to the Scotch bar in 1748; a lord of session in 1766. He died in 1792. He wrote some papers in the *World* and *Mirror*, and published several original tracts on religious, historical, and antiquarian subjects, and republished a great many more.—ED.]

you will see a tender-hearted operator, who probes the wound only to heal it. Swift, on the contrary, mangles human nature. He cuts and slashes, as if he took pleasure in the operation, like the tyrant who said, *Ita feri ut se sentiat emori.*" Johnson seemed to be much gratified by this just and well-turned compliment.

He recommended to me to keep a journal of my life, full and unreserved. He said it would be a very good exercise, and would yield me great satisfaction when the particulars were faded from my remembrance. I was uncommonly fortunate in having had a previous coincidence of opinion with him upon this subject, for I had kept such a journal for some time; and it was no small pleasure to me to have this to tell him, and to receive his approbation. He counselled me to keep it private, and said I might surely have a friend who would burn it in case of my death. From this habit I have been enabled to give the world so many anecdotes, which would otherwise have been lost to posterity. I mentioned that I was afraid I put into my journal too many little incidents. JOHNSON. "There is nothing, sir, too little for so little a creature as man. It is by studying little things that we attain the great art of having as little misery and as much happiness as possible."

Next morning Mr. Dempster happened to call on me, and was so much struck even with the imperfect account which I gave him of Dr. Johnson's conversation, that to his honour be it recorded, when I complained that drinking port and sitting up late with him affected my nerves for some time after, he said, "One had better be palsied at eighteen than not keep company with such a man."

On Tuesday, July 18, I found tall Sir Thomas Robinson sitting with Johnson. Sir Thomas said,

that the King of Prussia valued himself upon three things;—upon being a hero, a musician, and an authour. JOHNSON. "Pretty well, sir, for one man. As to his being an authour, I have not looked at his poetry; but his prose is poor stuff. He writes just as you may suppose Voltaire's footboy to do, who has been his amanuensis. He has such parts as the valet might have, and about as much of the colouring of the style as might be got by transcribing his works." When I was at Ferney, I repeated this to Voltaire, in order to reconcile him somewhat to Johnson, whom he, in affecting the English mode of expression, had previously characterised as "a superstitious dog;" but after hearing such a criticism on Frederick the Great, with whom he was then on bad terms, he exclaimed, "An honest fellow!"

But I think the criticism much too severe; for the "Memoirs of the House of Brandenburgh" are written as well as many works of that kind. His poetry, for the style of which he himself makes a frank apology, "*jargonnant un François barbare*," though fraught with pernicious ravings of infidelity, has, in many places, great animation, and in some a pathetick tenderness.

Upon this contemptuous animadversion on the King of Prussia, I observed to Johnson, "It would seem then, sir, that much less parts are necessary to make a king, than to make an authour: for the King of Prussia is confessedly the greatest king now in Europe, yet you think he makes a very poor figure as an authour."

Mr. Levet this day showed me Dr. Johnson's library, which was contained in two garrets over his chambers, where Lintot, son of the celebrated bookseller of that name, had formerly his warehouse. I

found a number of good books, but very dusty and in great confusion. The floor was strewed with manuscript leaves, in Johnson's own handwriting, which I beheld with a degree of veneration, supposing they perhaps might contain portions of the Rambler, or of Rasselas. I observed an apparatus for chymical experiments, of which Johnson was all his life very fond. The place seemed to be very favourable for retirement and meditation. Johnson told me, that he went up thither without mentioning it to his servant when he wanted to study, secure from interruption; for he would not allow his servant to say he was not at home when he really was. "A servant's strict regard for truth," said he, "must be weakened by such a practice. A philosopher may know that it is merely a form of denial; but few servants are such nice distinguishers. If I accustom a servant to tell a lie for *me*, have I not reason to apprehend that he will tell many lies for *himself?*" I am, however, satisfied that every servant, of any degree of intelligence, understands saying his master is not at home, not at all as the affirmation of a fact, but as customary words, intimating that his master wishes not to be seen; so that there can be no bad effect from it.

Mr. Temple, now vicar of St. Gluvias, Cornwall, who had been my intimate friend for many years, had at this time chambers in Farrar's-buildings, at the bottom of Inner Temple-lane, which he kindly lent me upon my quitting my lodgings, he being to return to Trinity-hall, Cambridge. I found them particularly convenient for me, as they were so near Dr. Johnson's.

On Wednesday, July 20, Dr. Johnson, Mr. Dempster, and my uncle Dr. Boswell, who happened to be now in London, supped with me at these chambers.

JOHNSON. "Pity is not natural to man. Children are always cruel. Savages are always cruel[1]. Pity is acquired and improved by the cultivation of reason. We may have uneasy sensations from seeing a creature in distress, without pity; for we have not pity unless we wish to relieve them. When I am on my way to dine with a friend, and finding it late, have bid the coachman make haste, if I happen to attend when he whips his horses, I may feel unpleasantly that the animals are put to pain, but I do not wish him to desist. No, sir, I wish him to drive on."

Mr. Alexander Donaldson, bookseller, of Edinburgh, had for some time opened a shop in London, and sold his cheap editions of the most popular English books, in defiance of the supposed common-law right of *Literary Property*. Johnson, though he concurred in the opinion which was afterwards sanctioned by a judgment of the house of lords, that there was no such right, was at this time very angry that the booksellers of London, for whom he uniformly professed much regard, should suffer from an invasion of what they had ever considered to be secure; and he was loud and violent against Mr. Donaldson. "He is a fellow who takes advantage of the law to injure his brethren; for notwithstanding that the statute secures only fourteen years of exclusive right, it has always been understood by the *trade*, that he who buys the copyright of a book from the authour obtains a perpetual property; and upon that belief, numberless bargains are made to transfer that pro-

[1] [Johnson's antithesis between pity and cruelty is not exact, and the argument (such as it is) drawn from it, is therefore inconclusive. Pity is as natural to man as any other emotion of the mind. The Bishop of Ferns observes, that children are said to be *cruel*, when it would be more just to say that they are *ignorant*—they do not know that they give pain. Nor are savages cruel in the sense here used, for cruelty's sake; they use cruel means to attain an object, because they know no other mode of accomplishing the object: and so far is pity from being acquired solely by the cultivation of reason, that reason is one of the checks upon the pity natural to mankind.—ED.]

perty after the expiration of the statutory term. Now Donaldson, I say, takes advantage here of people who have really an equitable title from usage; and if we consider how few of the books, of which they buy the property, succeed so well as to bring profit, we should be of opinion that the term of fourteen years is too short; it should be sixty years." DEMPSTER. "Donaldson, sir, is anxious for the encouragement of literature. He reduces the price of books, so that poor students may buy them." JOHNSON (laughing). "Well, sir, allowing that to be his motive, he is no better than Robin Hood, who robbed the rich in order to give to the poor."

It is remarkable, that when the great question concerning literary property came to be ultimately tried before the supreme tribunal of this country, in consequence of the very spirited exertions[1] of Mr. Donaldson, Dr. Johnson was zealous against a perpetuity; but he thought that the term of the exclusive right of authours should be considerably enlarged. He was then for granting a hundred years.

The conversation now turned upon Mr. David Hume's style. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, his style is not English; the structure of his sentences is French. Now the French structure and the English structure may, in the nature of things, be equally good. But if you allow that the English language is established, he is wrong. My name might originally have been Nicholson, as well as Johnson; but were you to call me Nicholson now, you would call me very absurdly."

Rousseau's treatise on the inequality of mankind was at this time a fashionable topick. It gave rise to an observation by Mr. Dempster, that the advan-

[1] [It savours of that nationality which Mr. Boswell was so anxious to disclaim, to talk thus eulogistically of "the very spirited exertions" of a piratical bookseller.—ED.]

tages of fortune and rank were nothing to a wise man, who ought to value only merit. JOHNSON. "If man were a savage, living in the woods by himself, this might be true; but in civilized society we all depend upon each other, and our happiness is very much owing to the good opinion of mankind. Now, sir, in civilized society, external advantages make us more respected. A man with a good coat upon his back meets with a better reception than he who has a bad one. Sir, you may analyse this, and say what is there in it? But that will avail you nothing, for it is a part of a general system. Pound St. Paul's church into atoms, and consider any single atom; it is, to be sure, good for nothing: but put all these atoms together, and you have St. Paul's church. So it is with human felicity, which is made up of many ingredients, each of which may be shown to be very insignificant. In civilized society, personal merit will not serve you so much as money will. Sir, you may make the experiment. Go into the street and give one man a lecture on morality, and another a shilling, and see which will respect you most. If you wish only to support nature, Sir William Petty fixes your allowance at three pounds a year; but as times are much altered, let us call it six pounds. This sum will fill your belly, shelter you from the weather, and even get you a strong lasting coat, supposing it to be made of good bull's hide. Now, sir, all beyond this is artificial, and is desired in order to obtain a greater degree of respect from our fellow-creatures. And, sir, if six hundred pounds a year procure a man more consequence, and, of course, more happiness than six pounds a year, the same proportion will hold as to six thousand, and so on, as far as opulence can be carried. Perhaps he who has a large fortune may not be so happy as he who has

a small one; but that must proceed from other causes than from his having the large fortune: for, *cæteris paribus*, he who is rich in a civilized society, must be happier than he who is poor; as riches, if properly used (and it is a man's own fault if they are not), must be productive of the highest advantages. Money, to be sure, of itself is of no use: for its only use is to part with it. Rousseau, and all those who deal in paradoxes, are led away by a childish desire of novelty[1]. When I was a boy, I used always to choose the wrong side of a debate[2], because most ingenious things, that is to say, most new things, could be said upon it. Sir, there is nothing for which you may not muster up more plausible arguments, than those which are urged against wealth and other external advantages. Why, now, there is stealing; why should it be thought a crime? When we consider by what unjust methods property has been often acquired, and that what was unjustly got it must be unjust to keep, where is the harm in one man's taking the property of another from him? Besides, sir, when we consider the bad use that many people make of their property, and how much better use the thief may make of it, it may be defended as a very allowable practice. Yet, sir, the experience of mankind has discovered stealing to be so very bad a thing, that they make no scruple to hang a man for it. When I was running about this town a very poor fellow, I was a great arguer for the advantages of poverty; but I was, at the same time, very sorry to be poor. Sir, all the arguments which are brought to represent poverty as no evil, show it to be evidently

[1] Johnson told Dr. Burney that Goldsmith said, when he first began to write, he determined to commit to paper nothing but what was *new*; but he afterwards found that what was *new* was generally false, and from that time was no longer solicitous about novelty.—BURNEY.

[2] [This boyish practice appears to have adhered, in some degree, to the *man*.—ED.]

a great evil. You never find people labouring to convince you that you may live very happily upon a plentiful fortune. So you hear people talking how miserable a king must be; and yet they all wish to be in his place."

It was suggested that kings must be unhappy because they are deprived of the greatest of all satisfactions, easy and unreserved society. JOHNSON. "That is an ill-founded notion. Being a king does not exclude a man from such society. Great kings have always been social. The king of Prussia, the only great king at present, is very social. Charles the Second, the last king of England who was a man of parts, was social; and our Henrys and Edwards were all social[1]."

Mr. Dempster having endeavoured to maintain that intrinsick merit *ought* to make the only distinction amongst mankind: JOHNSON. "Why, sir, mankind have found that this cannot be. How shall we determine the proportion of intrinsick merit? Were that to be the only distinction amongst mankind, we should soon quarrel about the degrees of it. Were all distinctions abolished, the strongest would not long acquiesce, but would endeavour to obtain a superiority by their bodily strength. But, sir, as subordination is very necessary for society, and contentions for superiority very dangerous, mankind, that is to say, all civilized nations, have settled it upon a plain invariable principle. A man is born to hereditary rank; or, his being appointed to certain offices gives him a certain rank. Subordination tends greatly to human happiness. Were we all upon an equality, we should have no other enjoyment than mere animal pleasure."

[1] [This opinion has received strong confirmation from his late majesty, George the Fourth, whose natural abilities were undoubtedly very considerable, whose reign was eminently glorious, and whose private life was amiable and social.—ED.]

I said, I consider distinction of rank to be of so much importance in civilized society, that if I were asked on the same day to dine with the first duke in England, and with the first man in Britain for genius, I should hesitate which to prefer. JOHNSON. "To be sure, sir, if you were to dine only once, and it were never to be known where you dined, you would choose rather to dine with the first man for genius; but to gain most respect, you should dine with the first duke in England. For nine people in ten that you meet with would have a higher opinion of you for having dined with a duke; and the great genius himself would receive you better, because you had been with the great duke."

He took care to guard himself against any possible suspicion that his settled principles of reverence for rank and respect for wealth were at all owing to mean or interested motives; for he asserted his own independence as a literary man. "No man," said he, "who ever lived by literature, has lived more independently than I have done." He said he had taken longer time than he needed to have done in composing his Dictionary. He received our compliments upon that great work with complacency, and told us that the academy *della Crusca* could scarcely believe that it was done by one man.

Next morning I found him alone, and have preserved the following fragments of his conversation. Of a gentleman[1] who was mentioned, he said, "I have not met with any man for a long time who has given me such general displeasure. He is totally unfixed in his principles, and wants to puzzle other people." I said his principles had been poisoned by

[1] [Probably Mr. Dempster, whose share in the preceding conversation was very likely to have displeased Johnson. The "infidel writer" is no doubt Dempster's countryman, Mr. Hume.—ED.]

a noted infidel writer, but that he was, nevertheless, a benevolent good man. JOHNSON. "We can have no dependence upon that instinctive, that constitutional goodness which is not founded upon principle. I grant you that such a man may be a very amiable member of society. I can conceive him placed in such a situation that he is not much tempted to deviate from what is right; and as every man prefers virtue, when there is not some strong incitement to transgress its precepts, I can conceive him doing nothing wrong. But if such a man stood in need of money, I should not like to trust him; and I should certainly not trust him with young ladies, for *there* there is always temptation. Hume, and other sceptical innovators, are vain men, and will gratify themselves at any expense. Truth will not afford sufficient food to their vanity; so they have betaken themselves to errour. Truth, sir, is a cow which will yield such people no more milk, and so they are gone to milk the bull. If I could have allowed myself to gratify my vanity at the expense of truth, what fame might I have acquired? Every thing which Hume has advanced against Christianity had passed through my mind long before he wrote. Always remember this, that after a system is well settled upon positive evidence, a few partial objections ought not to shake it. The human mind is so limited, that it cannot take in all the parts of a subject, so that there may be objections raised against any thing. There are objections against a *plenum*, and objections against a *vacuum;* yet one of them must certainly be true."

I mentioned Hume's argument against the belief of miracles, that it is more probable that the witnesses to the truth of them are mistaken, or speak falsely, than that the miracles should be true. JOHNSON.

"Why, sir, the great difficulty of proving miracles should make us very cautious in believing them. But let us consider; although God has made nature to operate by certain fixed laws, yet it is not unreasonable to think that he may suspend those laws, in order to establish a system highly advantageous to mankind. Now the Christian religion is a most beneficial system, as it gives us light and certainty where we were before in darkness and doubt. The miracles which prove it are attested by men who had no interest in deceiving us; but who, on the contrary, were told that they should suffer persecution, and did actually lay down their lives in confirmation of the truth of the facts which they asserted. Indeed, for some centuries the heathens did not pretend to deny the miracles; but said they were performed by the aid of evil spirits. This is a circumstance of great weight. Then, sir, when we take the proofs derived from prophecies which have been so exactly fulfilled, we have most satisfactory evidence. Supposing a miracle possible, as to which, in my opinion, there can be no doubt, we have as strong evidence for the miracles in support of Christianity, as the nature of the thing admits."

At night, Mr. Johnson and I supped in a private room at the Turk's-head coffee-house, in the Strand. "I encourage this house," said he, "for the mistress of it is a good civil woman, and has not much business."

"Sir, I love the acquaintance of young people; because, in the first place, I don't like to think myself growing old. In the next place, young acquaintances must last longest, if they do last; and then, sir, young men have more virtue than old men; they have more generous sentiments in every respect. I love the young dogs of this age, they have more wit and

humour and knowledge of life than we had[1]; but then the dogs are not so good scholars. Sir, in my early years I read very hard. It is a sad reflection, but a true one, that I knew almost as much at eighteen as I do now[2]. My judgment, to be sure, was not so good; but I had all the facts. I remember very well, when I was at Oxford, an old gentleman said to me, 'Young man, ply your book diligently now, and acquire a stock of knowledge; for when years come upon you, you will find that poring upon books will be but an irksome task.'"

This account of his reading, given by himself in plain words, sufficiently confirms what I have already advanced upon the disputed question as to his application. It reconciles any seeming inconsistency in his way of talking upon it at different times; and shows that idleness and reading hard were with him relative terms, the import of which, as used by him, must be gathered from a comparison with what scholars of different degrees of ardour and assiduity have been known to do. And let it be remembered, that he was now talking spontaneously, and expressing his genuine sentiments; whereas at other times he might be induced, from his spirit of contradiction, or more properly from his love of argumentative contest, to speak lightly of his own application to study. It is pleasing to consider that the old gentleman's gloomy prophecy as to the irksomeness of books to men of an advanced age, which is too often fulfilled, was so far from being verified in Johnson, that his ardour for literature never failed, and his last writings

[1] [The justice of this assertion may be doubted. Johnson was comparing men of such a rank and station as he now met, with the narrow, provincial, and inferior society in which his own youth was spent.—ED.]

[2] His great period of study was from the age of twelve to that of eighteen; as he told Mr. Langton, who gave me this information.—MALONE. [He went to Oxford in his nineteenth year, and seems to have translated the Messiah when he had been there not quite three months. See *ante*, p. 32, *note*.—ED.]

had more ease and vivacity than any of his earlier productions.

He mentioned it to me now, for the first time, that he had been distressed by melancholy, and for that reason had been obliged to fly from study and meditation to the dissipating variety of life. Against melancholy he recommended constant occupation of mind, a great deal of exercise, moderation in eating and drinking, and especially to shun drinking at night[1]. He said melancholy people were apt to fly to intemperance for relief, but that it sunk them much deeper in misery. He observed, that labouring men who work hard, and live sparingly, are seldom or never troubled with low spirits.

He again insisted on the duty of maintaining subordination of rank. "Sir, I would no more deprive a nobleman of his respect than of his money. I consider myself as acting a part in the great system of society, and I do to others as I would have them to do to me. I would behave to a nobleman as I should expect he would behave to me, were I a nobleman and he Sam. Johnson. Sir, there is one Mrs. Macaulay[2] in this town, a great republican. One day when I was at her house, I put on a very grave countenance, and said to her, 'Madam, I am now become a convert to your way of thinking, I am convinced that all mankind are upon an equal footing; and to give you an unquestionable proof, madam, that I am in earnest, here is a very sensible, civil, well-behaved fellow-citizen, your footman; I desire that he may be allowed to sit down and dine with us.' I thus, sir, showed her the absurdity of the levelling doctrine. She has never liked me since. Sir, your levellers

[1] [See *ante*, p. 74, *note*.—ED.]

[2] This *one* Mrs. Macaulay was the same personage who afterwards made herself so much known as "the celebrated female historian." [See *ante*, p. 225. —ED.]

wish to level *down* as far as themselves; but they cannot bear levelling *up* to themselves. They would all have some people under them; why not then have some people above them?" I mentioned a certain authour[1] who disgusted me by his forwardness, and by showing no deference to noblemen into whose company he was admitted. JOHNSON. "Suppose a shoemaker should claim an equality with him, as he does with a lord: how he would stare. 'Why, sir, do you stare? (says the shoemaker) I do great service to society. 'Tis true I am paid for doing it; but so are you, sir: and I am sorry to say it, better paid than I am, for doing something not so necessary. For mankind could do better without your books, than without my shoes.' Thus, sir, there would be a perpetual struggle for precedence were there no fixed invariable rules for the distinction of rank, which creates no jealousy, as it is allowed to be accidental."

He said, Dr. Joseph Warton was a very agreeable man, and his "Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope," a very pleasing book. I wondered that he delayed so long to give us the continuation of it. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, I suppose he finds himself a little disappointed, in not having been able to persuade the world to be of his opinion as to Pope."

We have now been favoured with the concluding volume, in which, to use a parliamentary expression, he has *explained*, so as not to appear quite so adverse to the opinion of the world, concerning Pope, as was at first thought; and we must all agree, that his work is a most valuable accession to English literature.

A writer[2] of deserved eminence being mentioned,

[1] [Something of this kind has been imputed to Goldsmith.—ED.]

[2] [It is not easy to say who was here meant. Murphy, who was born poor, was distinguished for elegance of manners and conversation; and Fielding, who could not have been spoken of as alive in 1763, was born to better prospects, though he kept low company; and had it been Goldsmith, Boswell would probably have had no scruple in naming him.—ED.]

Johnson said, "Why, sir, he is a man of good parts, but being originally poor, he has got a love of mean company and low jocularity; a very bad thing, sir. To laugh is good, and to talk is good. But you ought no more to think it enough if you laugh, than you are to think it enough if you talk. You may laugh in as many ways as you talk; and surely *every* way of talking that is practised cannot be esteemed."

I spoke of Sir James Macdonald[1] as a young man of most distinguished merit, who united the highest reputation at Eton and Oxford, with the patriarchal spirit of a great highland chieftain. I mentioned that Sir James had said to me, that he had never seen Mr. Johnson, but he had a great respect for him, though at the same time it was mixed with some degree of terrour. JOHNSON. "Sir, if he were to be acquainted with me, it might lessen both."

The mention of this gentleman led us to talk of the Western Islands of Scotland, to visit which he expressed a wish that then appeared to me a very romantick fancy, which I little thought would be afterwards realised. He told me that his father had put Martin's account of those islands into his hands when he was very young, and that he was highly pleased with it; that he was particularly struck with the St. Kilda man's notion that the high church of Glasgow had been hollowed out of a rock[2]; a circumstance to which old Mr. Johnson had directed his attention. He said he would go to the Hebrides with me, when I returned from my travels, unless some very good companion should offer when I was absent, which he did not think probable; adding, "There are few people whom I take so much to as you." And when I talked of my leaving England, he said

[1] [See *post*, 27th March, 1772, and 5th September, 1773.—ED.]

[2] [In the Spectator, No. 50, Addison makes the Indian king suppose that St. Paul's was carved out of a rock.—ED.]

with a very affectionate air, "My dear Boswell, I should be very unhappy at parting, did I think we were not to meet again." I cannot too often remind my readers, that although such instances of his kindness are doubtless very flattering to me, yet I hope my recording them will be ascribed to a better motive than to vanity; for they afford unquestionable evidence of his tenderness and complacency, which some, while they were forced to acknowledge his great powers, have been so strenuous to deny.

He maintained that a boy at school was the happiest of human beings. I supported a different opinion, from which I have never yet varied, that a man is happier: and I enlarged upon the anxiety and sufferings which are endured at school. JOHNSON. "Ah! sir, a boy's being flogged is not so severe as a man's having the hiss of the world against him. Men have a solicitude about fame; and the greater share they have of it, the more afraid they are of losing it." I silently asked myself, "Is it possible that the great SAMUEL JOHNSON really entertains any such apprehension, and is not confident that his exalted fame is established upon a foundation never to be shaken?"

He this evening drank a bumper to Sir David Dalrymple, [afterwards Lord Hailes,] "as a man of worth, a scholar, and a wit." "I have (said he) never heard of him, except from you; but let him know my opinion of him: for as he does not show himself much in the world, he should have the praise of the few who hear of him."

On Tuesday, July 26, I found Mr. Johnson alone. It was a very wet day, and I again complained of the disagreeable effects of such weather[1]. JOHNSON. "Sir, this is all imagination, which physicians en-

[1] [See *ante*, pp. 318 and 441.—ED.]

courage; for man lives in air, as a fish lives in water; so that if the atmosphere press heavy from above, there is an equal resistance from below. To be sure, bad weather is hard upon people who are obliged to be abroad; and men cannot labour so well in the open air in bad weather, as in good; but, sir, a smith or a tailor, whose work is within doors, will surely do as much in rainy weather, as in fair. Some very delicate frames, indeed, may be affected by wet weather; but not common constitutions."

We talked of the education of children; and I asked him what he thought was best to teach them first. JOHNSON. "Sir, it is no matter what you teach them first, any more than what leg you shall put into your breeches first. Sir, you may stand disputing which is best to put in first, but in the mean time your breech is bare. Sir, while you are considering which of two things you should teach your child first, another boy has learnt them both."

On Thursday, July 28, we again supped in private at the Turk's-head coffee-house. JOHNSON. "Swift has a higher reputation than he deserves. His excellence is strong sense; for his humour, though very well, is not remarkably good. I doubt whether the 'Tale of a Tub' be his; for he never owned it, and it is much above his usual manner[1]."

"Thomson, I think, had as much of the poet about him as most writers. Every thing appeared to him through the medium of his favourite pursuit. He could not have viewed those two candles burning but with a poetical eye."

[1] This opinion was given by him more at large at a subsequent period. See *post*, 16th Aug. 1773.—BOSWELL. [How could Johnson doubt that Swift was the author of the Tale of a Tub, when, as he himself relates in his Life of Swift, "No other claimants can be produced; and when Archbishop Sharpe and the Duchess of Somerset, by showing it to Queen Anne, debarred Swift of a bishoprick, *he did not deny it.*" We have, moreover, Swift's own acknowledgment of it, in his letter to Ben. Tooke the printer, 29th June, 1710.—ED.]

"Has not ———[1] a great deal of wit, sir?" JOHNSON. "I do not think so, sir. He is, indeed, continually attempting wit, but he fails. And I have no more pleasure in hearing a man attempting wit and failing, than in seeing a man trying to leap over a ditch and tumbling into it."

He laughed heartily when I mentioned to him a saying of his concerning Mr. Thomas Sheridan, which Foote took a wicked pleasure to circulate. "Why, sir, Sherry is dull, naturally dull; but it must have taken him a great deal of pains to become what we now see him. Such an excess of stupidity, sir, is not in nature."—"So (said he), I allowed him all his own merit."

He now added, "Sheridan cannot bear me. I bring his declamation to a point[2]. I ask him a plain question, 'What do you mean to teach?' Besides, sir, what influence can Mr. Sheridan have upon the language of this great country, by his narrow exertions? Sir, it is burning a farthing candle at Dover, to show light at Calais."

Talking of a young man who was uneasy from thinking that he was very deficient in learning and knowledge, he said, "A man has no reason to complain who holds a middle place, and has many below him; and perhaps he has not six of his years above him; perhaps not one. Though he may not know any thing perfectly, the general mass of knowledge that he has acquired is considerable. Time will do for him all that is wanting."

The conversation then took a philosophical turn. JOHNSON. "Human experience, which is constantly

[1] [There is no doubt that this blank must be filled with the name of Mr. Burke. See *post*, 15th Aug. and 15th Sept. 1773, and 25th April, 1778.—ED.]

[2] [He endeavours to assign a reason for Sheridan's dissatisfaction very different from the true one; there is even reason to suppose, from Mr. Boswell's own account, that Johnson and Sheridan never met after Johnson's insult to Sheridan on the subject of the pension. See *ante*, p. 398.—ED.]

contradicting theory, is the great test of truth. A system built upon the discoveries of a great many minds is always of more strength, than what is produced by the mere workings of any one mind, which, of itself, can do little. There is not so poor a book in the world that would not be a prodigious effort were it wrought out entirely by a single mind, without the aid of prior investigators. The French writers are superficial, because they are not scholars, and so proceed upon the mere power of their own minds; and we see how very little power they have."

"As to the Christian religion, sir, besides the strong evidence which we have for it, there is a balance in its favour from the number of great men who have been convinced of its truth, after a serious consideration of the question. Grotius was an acute man, a lawyer, a man accustomed to examine evidence, and he was convinced. Grotius was not a recluse, but a man of the world, who certainly had no bias to the side of religion. Sir Isaac Newton [1] set out an infidel, and came to be a very firm believer."

He this evening again recommended to me to perambulate Spain [2]. I said it would amuse him to get a letter from me dated at Salamanca. JOHNSON. "I love the university of Salamanca; for when the Spaniards were in doubt as to the lawfulness of their conquering America, the university of Salamanca gave it as their opinion that it was not law-

[1] [Where, the Bishop of Ferns asks, did Johnson learn this? It is true that Dr. Horsely declined publishing some papers on religious subjects which Newton left behind him—some have suspected that they were tainted with Unitarianism; others (probably from a consideration of his work on the Revelations) believed that they were in a strain of mysticism not (in the opinion of his friends) worthy of so great a genius; and the recent publication of his two letters to Locke, in a style of infantine simplicity (see Lord King's *Life of Locke*), give additional colour to this latter opinion: but for Johnson's assertion that he *set out* an infidel, there appears no authority, and all the inferences are the other way.—ED.]

[2] I fully intended to have followed advice of such weight; but having staid much longer both in Germany and Italy than I proposed to do, and having also visited Corsica, I found that I had exceeded the time allowed me by my father, and hastened to France in my way homewards.—BOSWELL.

ful." He spoke this with great emotion, and with that generous warmth which dictated the lines in his "London," against Spanish encroachment.

I expressed my opinion of my *friend* Derrick as but a *poor* writer[1]. JOHNSON. "To be sure, sir, he is: but you are to consider that his being a literary man has got for him all that he has. It has made him king of Bath. Sir, he has nothing to say for himself but that he is a writer. Had he not been a writer, he must have been sweeping the crossings in the streets, and asking halfpence from every body that passed."

In justice, however, to the memory of Mr. Derrick, who was my first tutor in the ways of London, and showed me the town in all its variety of departments both literary and sportive, the particulars of which Dr. Johnson advised me to put in writing, it is proper to mention what Johnson, at a subsequent period, said of him both as a writer and an editor: "Sir, I have often said, that if Derrick's letters had been written by one of a more established name, they would have been thought very pretty letters." And, "I sent Derrick to Dryden's relations to gather materials for his life; and I believe he got all that I myself should have got."

27 Aug. 1773.

22 Sept. 1773.

Poor Derrick! I remember him with kindness. Yet I cannot withhold from my readers a pleasant humorous sally which could not have hurt him had he been alive, and now is perfectly harmless. In his collection of poems, there is one upon entering the harbour of Dublin, his native city, after a long absence. It begins thus:

> "Eblana! much loved city, hail!
> Where first I saw the light of day."

And after a solemn reflection on his being "num-

[1] [*Call ye that backing your friends?*—ED.]

bered with forgotten dead," there is the following stanza:

> "Unless my lines protract my fame,
> And those, who chance to read them, cry,
> I knew him! Derrick was his name,
> In yonder tomb his ashes lie:"

which was thus happily parodied by Mr. John Home, to whom we owe the beautiful and pathetick tragedy of Douglas:

> "Unless my *deeds* protract my fame,
> *And he who passes sadly sings,*
> I knew him! Derrick was his name,
> *On yonder tree his carcass swings!*"

I doubt much whether the amiable and ingenious authour of these burlesque lines will recollect them; for they were produced extempore one evening while he and I were walking together in the dining room at Eglingtoune Castle, in 1760, and I have never mentioned them to him since.

Johnson said once to me, "Sir, I honour Derrick for his presence of mind. One night, when Floyd[1], another poor authour, was wandering about the streets in the night, he found Derrick fast asleep upon a bulk; upon being suddenly waked, Derrick started up: 'My dear Floyd, I am sorry to see you in this destitute state: will you go home with me to *my lodgings*[2]?' "

I again begged his advice as to my method of study at Utrecht. "Come," said he, "let us make a day of it. Let us go down to Greenwich and dine, and talk of it there." The following Saturday was fixed for this excursion.

As we walked along the Strand to-night, arm in arm, a woman of the town accosted us, in the usual enticing manner. "No, no, my girl," said Johnson;

[1] He published a biographical work, containing an account of eminent writers, in three volumes, 8vo.

[2] [No great presence of mind; for Floyd would naturally have accepted the proposal, and then Derrick would have been doubly exposed.—Ed.]

"it won't do." He, however, did not treat her with harshness; and we talked of the wretched life of such women, and agreed, that much more misery than happiness, upon the whole, is produced by illicit commerce between the sexes.

On Saturday, July 30, Dr. Johnson and I took a sculler at the Temple-stairs, and set out for Greenwich. I asked him if he really thought a knowledge of the Greek and Latin languages an essential requisite to a good education. JOHNSON. "Most certainly, sir; for those who know them have a very great advantage over those who do not. Nay, sir, it is wonderful what a difference learning makes upon people even in the common intercourse of life, which does not appear to be much connected with it." "And yet," said I, "people go through the world very well, and carry on the business of life to good advantage, without learning." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, that may be true in cases where learning cannot possibly be of any use; for instance, this boy rows us as well without learning, as if he could sing the song of Orpheus to the Argonauts, who were the first sailors." He then called to the boy, "What would you give, my lad, to know about the Argonauts?" "Sir," said the boy, "I would give what I have." Johnson was much pleased with his answer, and we gave him a double fare. Dr. Johnson then turning to me, "Sir," said he, "a desire of knowledge is the natural feeling of mankind; and every human being whose mind is not debauched, will be willing to give all that he has to get knowledge."

We landed at the Old Swan[1], and walked to Billingsgate, where we took oars, and moved smoothly along

[1] [The erection of a new London bridge may render it useful to observe that with the ebb-tide it is dangerous to pass through, or *shoot*, as it is called, the arches of the old bridge: passengers, therefore, land above the bridge, and walk to some wharf below it.—ED.]

the silver Thames. It was a very fine day. We were entertained with the immense number and variety of ships that were lying at anchor, and with the beautiful country on each side of the river.

I talked of preaching, and of the great success which those called methodists[1] have. JOHNSON. "Sir, it is owing to their expressing themselves in a plain and familiar manner, which is the only way to do good to the common people, and which clergymen of genius and learning ought to do from a principle of duty, when it is suited to their congregations; a practice, for which they will be praised by men of sense. To insist against drunkenness as a crime, because it debases reason, the noblest faculty of man, would be of no service to the common people: but to tell them that they may die in a fit of drunkenness, and show them how dreadful that would be, cannot fail to make a

[1] All who are acquainted with the history of religion (the most important, surely, that concerns the human mind), know that the appellation of *Methodists* was first given to a society of students in the university of Oxford, who, about the year 1730, were distinguished by an earnest and *methodical* attention to devout exercises. This disposition of mind is not a novelty, or peculiar to any sect, but has been and still may be found, in many Christians of every denomination. Johnson himself was, in a dignified manner, a methodist. In his Rambler, No. 110, he mentions with respect "the whole discipline of regulated piety;" and in his "Prayers and Meditations," many instances occur of his anxious examination into his spiritual state. That this religious earnestness, and in particular an observation of the influence of the Holy Spirit, has sometimes degenerated into folly, and sometimes been counterfeited for base purposes, cannot be denied. But it is not, therefore, fair to decry it when genuine. The principal argument in reason and good sense against methodism is, that it tends to debase human nature, and prevent the generous exertions of goodness, by an unworthy supposition that God will pay no regard to them; although it is positively said in the scriptures, that he "will reward every man according to his works." But I am happy to have it in my power to do justice to those whom it is the fashion to ridicule, without any knowledge of their tenets; and this I can do by quoting a passage from one of their best apologists, Mr. Milner, who thus expresses their doctrine upon this subject: "Justified by faith, renewed in his faculties, and constrained by the love of Christ, their believer moves in the sphere of love and gratitude, and all his *duties* flow more or less from this principle. And though *they are accumulating for him in heaven a treasure of bliss proportioned to his faithfulness and activity, and it is by no means inconsistent with his principles to feel the force of this consideration*, yet love itself sweetens every duty to his mind; and he thinks there is no absurdity in his feeling the love of God as the grand commanding principle of his life." *Essays on several religious Subjects, &c. by Joseph Milner, A. M. master of the grammar school of Kingston-upon-Hull*, 1789, p. 11.—BOSWELL. [Mr. Joseph Milner was brother of Dr. Isaac Milner, who died Dean of Carlisle.—ED.]

deep impression. Sir, when your Scotch clergy give up their homely manner, religion will soon decay in that country." Let this observation, as Johnson meant it, be ever remembered.

I was much pleased to find myself with Johnson at Greenwich, which he celebrates in his "London" as a favourite scene. I had the poem in my pocket, and read the lines aloud with enthusiasm:

> "On Thames's banks in silent thought we stood,
> Where Greenwich smiles upon the silver flood:
> Pleased with the seat which gave ELIZA birth,
> We kneel, and kiss the consecrated earth."

He remarked that the structure of Greenwich hospital was too magnificent for a place of charity, and that its parts were too much detached, to make one great whole [1].

Buchanan, he said, was a very fine poet [2]; and observed, that he was the first who complimented a lady, by ascribing to her the different perfections of the heathen goddesses [3]; but that Johnstone [4] improved upon this, by making his lady, at the same time, free from their defects.

He dwelt upon Buchanan's elegant verses to Mary, Queen of Scots, *Nympha Caledoniæ*, &c. and spoke with enthusiasm of the beauty of Latin verse. "All the modern languages (said he) cannot furnish so melodious a line as

> "*Formosam resonare doces Amarillida silvas.*"

Afterwards he entered upon the business of the

[1] [A very just criticism, which, considering Johnson's defective vision, and his consequent imperfect judgment on all the fine arts, may be suspected to have been suggested to him by his friend Mr. Gwynne, the architect.—ED.]

[2] [See *post*, sub. 30th March, 1783.—ED.]

[3] Epigram, Lib. II. "In Elizabeth. Angliæ Reg."—I suspect that the authour's memory here deceived him, and that Johnson said, "the first *modern* poet;" for there is a well known Epigram in the ANTHOLOGIA, containing this kind of eulogy.—MALONE.

[4] [Arthur Johnstone, born near Aberdeen in 1587, an elegant Latin poet. His principal works are a volume of epigrams, (in which is to be found that to which Dr. Johnson alludes,) and a Latin paraphrase of the Psalms. He died at Oxford in 1641.—ED.]

day, which was to give me his advice as to a course of study. And here I am to mention with much regret, that my record of what he said is miserably scanty. I recollect with admiration an animating blaze of eloquence, which roused every intellectual power in me to the highest pitch, but must have dazzled me so much, that my memory could not preserve the substance of his discourse; for the note which I find of it is no more than this:—"He ran over the grand scale of human knowledge; advised me to select some particular branch to excel in, but to acquire a little of every kind." The defect of my minutes will be fully supplied by a long letter upon the subject, which he favoured me with, after I had been some time at Utrecht, and which my readers will have the pleasure to peruse in its proper place.

We walked in the evening in Greenwich park. He asked me, I suppose, by way of trying my disposition, "Is not this very fine?" Having no exquisite relish of the beauties of nature, and being more delighted with "the busy hum of men," I answered "Yes, sir; but not equal to Fleet-street." JOHNSON. "You are right, sir."

I am aware that many of my readers may censure my want of taste. Let me, however, shelter myself under the authority of a very fashionable baronet[1] in the brilliant world, who, on his attention being called to the fragrance of a May evening in the country, observed, "This may be very well; but for my part I prefer the smell of a flambeau at the playhouse."

[1] My friend Sir Michael Le Fleming. This gentleman, with all his experience of sprightly and elegant life, inherits, with the beautiful family domain, no inconsiderable share of that love of literature which distinguished his venerable grandfather, the Bishop of Carlisle. He one day observed to me, of Dr. Johnson, in a felicity of phrase, "There is a blunt dignity about him on every occasion."—BOSWELL.

Sir Michael Le Fleming died of an apoplectick fit, while conversing at the Admiralty with Lord Howick (now the Earl Grey), May 19, 1806.—MALONE.

We staid so long at Greenwich, that our sail up the river, in our return to London, was by no means so pleasant as in the morning; for the night air was so cold that it made me shiver. I was the more sensible of it from having sat up all the night before recollecting and writing in my Journal what I thought worthy of preservation; an exertion which, during the first part of my acquaintance with Johnson, I frequently made. I remember having sat up four nights in one week, without being much incommoded in the daytime.

Johnson, whose robust frame was not in the least affected by the cold, scolded me, as if my shivering had been a paltry effeminacy, saying, "Why do you shiver?" Sir William Scott [1], of the commons, told me, that when he complained of a head-ache in the post-chaise, as they were travelling together to Scotland, Johnson treated him in the same manner: "At your age, sir, I had no head-ache." It is not easy to make allowance for sensations in others, which we ourselves have not at the time. We must all have experienced how very differently we are affected by the complaints of our neighbours, when we are well and when we are ill. In full health, we can scarcely believe that they suffer much; so faint is the image of pain upon our imagination: when softened by sickness, we readily sympathize with the sufferings of others.

We concluded the day at the Turk's-head coffee-house very socially. He was pleased to listen to a particular account which I gave him of my family, and of its hereditary estate, as to the extent and population of which he asked questions, and made calculations; recommending, at the same time, a liberal

[1] [Now Lord Stowell, who accompanied Dr. Johnson from Newcastle to Edinburgh in 1773.—Ed.]

kindness to the tenantry, as people over whom the proprietor was placed by Providence. He took delight in hearing my description of the romantick seat of my ancestors. "I must be there, sir (said he), and we will live in the old castle; and if there is not a room in it remaining, we will build one." I was highly flattered, but could scarcely indulge a hope that Auchinleck would indeed be honoured by his presence, and celebrated by a description, as it afterwards was, in his "Journey to the Western Islands."

After we had again talked of my setting out for Holland, he said, "I must see thee out of England; I will accompany you to Harwich." I could not find words to express what I felt upon this unexpected and very great mark of his affectionate regard.

Next day, Sunday, July 31, I told him I had been that morning at a meeting of the people called Quakers, where I had heard a woman preach. JOHNSON. "Sir, a woman's preaching is like a dog's walking on his hind legs. It is not done well; but you are surprised to find it done at all."

On Tuesday, August 2, (the day of my departure from London having been fixed for the 5th,) Dr. Johnson did me the honour to pass a part of the morning with me at my chambers. He said, that "he always felt an inclination to do nothing." I observed, that it was strange to think that the most indolent man in Britain had written the most laborious work, THE ENGLISH DICTIONARY.

I mentioned an imprudent publication, by a certain friend of his, at an early period of life, and asked him if he thought it would hurt him. JOHNSON. "No, sir; not much. It may, perhaps, be mentioned at an election[1]."

[1] [This probably alludes to Mr. Burke's "*Vindication of Natural Society*," a

I had now made good my title to be a privileged man, and was carried by him in the evening to drink tea with Miss Williams, whom, though under the misfortune of having lost her sight, I found to be agreeable in conversation; for she had a variety of literature, and expressed herself well; but her peculiar value was the intimacy in which she had long lived with Johnson, by which she was well acquainted with his habits, and knew how to lead him on to talk.

After tea he carried me to what he called his walk, which was a long narrow paved court in the neighbourhood, overshadowed by some trees. There we sauntered a considerable time; and I complained to him that my love of London and of his company was such, that I shrunk almost from the thought of going away even to travel, which is generally so much desired by young men. He roused me by manly and spirited conversation. He advised me, when settled in any place abroad, to study with an eagerness after knowledge, and to apply to Greek an hour every day; and when I was moving about, to read diligently the great book of mankind.

On Wednesday, August 3, we had our last social evening at the Turk's-head coffee-house, before my setting out for foreign parts. I had the misfortune, before we parted, to irritate him unintentionally. I mentioned to him how common it was in the world to tell absurd stories of him, and to ascribe to him very strange sayings. JOHNSON. "What do they make me

work published in 1756, in a happy imitation of Lord Bolingbroke's style, and in an ironical adoption of his principles: the whole was so well done that it at first passed as a genuine work of Lord Bolingbroke's, and subsequently as the serious and (as in style and imagery it certainly is) splendid exposition of the principles of one of his disciples. Lord Chesterfield and Bishop Warburton are stated to have been so deceived; and it would seem from the passage in the text, that Johnson and Boswell were in the same error. In 1765, Mr. Burke reprinted this piece, with a preface, in which he throws off altogether the mask of irony. Mr. Boswell calls him a *friend of Johnson's*, for he himself had not yet met Mr. Burke.—ED.]

say, sir?" BOSWELL. "Why, sir, as an instance very strange indeed (laughing heartily as I spoke), David Hume told me, you said that you would stand before a battery of cannon to restore the convocation to its full powers." Little did I apprehend that he had actually said this: but I was soon convinced of my errour; for, with a determined look, he thundered out, "And would I not, sir? Shall the presbyterian *kirk* of Scotland have its general assembly, and the church of England be denied its convocation[1]?" He was walking up and down the room while I told him the anecdote; but when he uttered this explosion of high-church zeal, he had come close to my chair, and his eyes flashed with indignation. I bowed to the storm, and diverted the force of it, by leading him to expatiate on the influence which religion derived from maintaining the church with great external respectability.

I must not omit to mention that he this year wrote the Life of Ascham †, and the dedication to the Earl of Shaftesbury †, prefixed to the edition of that writer's English works, published by Mr. Bennet.

[Johnson was in fact the editor of this work, as appears from the following letter:

Harwood MSS.

"MR. T. DAVIES TO THE REV. EDM. BETTESWORTH.

"Russel-street, 3d Feb. 1763[2].

"REVEREND SIR,—I take the liberty to send you Roger Ascham's works in English; he is generally esteemed one of the most eminent writers of the days of Queen Elizabeth. Though Mr. Bennet's name is in the title, the editor was in reality Dr.

[1] [It must be confessed, that the existing practice relative to convocations is an absurd anomaly; the convocation is summoned to meet when parliament does, but its meeting is a mere form, and it neither does nor dare do any business. It is a solemn farce. The historical inquirer sees, in the tradition of the convocation, the analogy between the British parliament and convocation and the old *états généraux* of France.—ED.]

[2] [Such is the date, as Dr. Harwood originally read it, and it agrees with that of the publication of the book, but is inconsistent with the mention of Johnson by the title of *Doctor*, who had not even the Dublin degree till 1765. Dr. Harwood, on re-examining the MS., observes that the last figure is almost illegible, and *may* have been a 3, 7, or 9.—ED.]

Johnson, the author of the Rambler, who wrote the life of the author, and added several notes, besides those of Mr. Upton. Dr. Johnson gave it to Mr. Bennet, for his advantage. I charge you no more than bookseller's price, 10*s.* 6*d.*; it will be advertised at 12*s.* If not agreeable will take it again. I am, reverend sir, your most obedient humble servant,

"THOMAS DAVIES."]

On Friday, August 5, we set out early in the morning in the Harwich stage-coach. A fat elderly gentlewoman, and a young Dutchman, seemed the most inclined among us to conversation. At the inn where we dined, the gentlewoman said that she had done her best to educate her children; and particularly that she had never suffered them to be a moment idle. JOHNSON. "I wish, madam, you would educate me too; for I have been an idle fellow all my life." "I am sure, sir (said she), you have not been idle." JOHNSON. "Nay, madam, it is very true: and that gentleman there (pointing to me) has been idle. He was idle at Edinburgh. His father sent him to Glasgow, where he continued to be idle. He then came to London, where he has been very idle; and now he is going to Utrecht, where he will be as idle as ever." I asked him privately how he could expose me so. JOHNSON. "Poh, poh! (said he) they know nothing about you, and will think of it no more." In the afternoon the gentlewoman talked violently against the Roman Catholicks, and of the horrours of the inquisition. To the utter astonishment of all the passengers but myself, who knew that he could talk upon any side of a question, he defended the inquisition, and maintained, that "false doctrine should be checked on its first appearance; that the civil power should unite with the church in punishing those who dare to attack the established religion, and that such only were punished by the inquisition." He had in his pocket "*Pomponius Mela de Situ Orbis,*" in

which he read occasionally, and seemed very intent upon ancient geography. Though by no means niggardly, his attention to what was generally right was so minute, that having observed at one of the stages that I ostentatiously gave a shilling to the coachman, when the custom was for each passenger to give only sixpence, he took me aside and scolded me, saying that what I had done would make the coachman dissatisfied with all the rest of the passengers, who gave him no more than his due. This was a just reprimand; for in whatever way a man may indulge his generosity or his vanity in spending his money, for the sake of others he ought not to raise the price of any article for which there is a constant demand.

He talked of Mr. Blacklock's[1] poetry, so far as it was descriptive of visible objects: and observed that "as its authour had the misfortune to be blind, we may be absolutely sure that such passages are combinations of what he has remembered of the works of other writers who could see. That foolish fellow Spence has laboured to explain philosophically how Blacklock may have done, by means of his own faculties, what it is impossible he should do. The solution, as I have given it, is plain. Suppose I know a man to be so lame that he is absolutely incapable to move himself, and I find him in a different room from that in which I left him; shall I puzzle myself with idle conjectures, that, perhaps, his nerves have by some unknown change all at once become

[1] [Dr. Thomas Blacklock was born in 1721; he totally lost his sight by the small-pox at the age of six years, but was nevertheless a descriptive poet. He died in 1791. "We may conclude," says his biographer, "with Denina, on his *Discorso della Litteratura*, that Blacklock will appear to posterity a fable, as to us he is a *prodigy*. It will be thought a fiction, that a man blind from his infancy, besides having made himself master of various foreign languages, should be a great poet in his own, and without having hardly seen the light, should be so remarkably happy in description." Johnson, no doubt, gives the true solution of Blacklock's power, which was *memory* and not *miracle*; and, mark the result! who now *quotes*, nay, who *reads* a line of Blacklock?—ED.]

effective? No, sir, it is clear how he got into a different room; he was *carried*."

Having stopped a night at Colchester, Johnson talked of that town with veneration, for having stood a siege for Charles the First. The Dutchman alone now remained with us. He spoke English tolerably well; and thinking to recommend himself to us by expatiating on the superiority of the criminal jurisprudence of this country over that of Holland, he inveighed against the barbarity of putting an accused person to the torture, in order to force a confession. But Johnson was as ready for this, as for the inquisition. "Why, sir, you do not, I find, understand the law of your own country. To torture in Holland is considered as a favour to an accused person; for no man is put to the torture there, unless there is as much evidence against him as would amount to conviction in England. An accused person among you, therefore, has one chance more to escape punishment, than those who are tried among us[1]."

At supper this night he talked of good eating with uncommon satisfaction. "Some people," said he, "have a foolish way of not minding, or pretending not to mind what they eat. For my part, I mind my belly very studiously, and very carefully; for I look upon it, that he who does not mind his belly, will hardly mind any thing else." He now appeared to me *Jean Bull philosophe*, and he was for the moment, not only serious, but vehement. Yet I have heard him, upon other occasions, talk with great contempt of people who were anxious to gratify their palates; and the 206th number of his Rambler is a masterly essay against gulosity. His practice,

[1] [Is it possible that Johnson can be right? If the guilt be *proved*, can the law of any civilized country ask *more* than proof, and ask it under the extreme yet most doubtful sanction of *torture*? If the Editor has not forgotten all he has ever read of the law of Holland, Johnson must have been mistaken.—ED.]

indeed, I must acknowledge, may be considered as casting the balance of his different opinions upon this subject: for I never knew any man who relished good eating more than he did. When at table, he was totally absorbed in the business of the moment; his looks seemed riveted to his plate; nor would he, unless when in very high company, say one word, or even pay the least attention to what was said by others, till he had satisfied his appetite; which was so fierce, and indulged with such intenseness, that while in the act of eating, the veins of his forehead swelled, and generally a strong perspiration was visible. To those whose sensations were delicate, this could not but be disgusting[1]; and it was doubtless not very suitable to the character of a philosopher, who should be distinguished by self-command. But it must be owned, that Johnson, though he could be rigidly *abstemious*, was not a *temperate* man either in eating or drinking. He could refrain[2], but he could not use moderately. He told me that he had fasted two days without inconvenience, and that he had never been hungry but once. They who beheld with wonder how much he eat upon all occasions, when his dinner was to his taste, could not easily conceive what he must have meant by hunger; and not only was he remarkable for the extraordinary quantity which he eat, but he was, or affected to be, a man of very nice discernment in the science of cookery. He used to descant critically on the dishes which had been at table where he had dined or supped, and to recollect very minutely what he had liked. I remember when he was in Scotland, his

[1] [See *ante*, p. 255 *n*.—ED.]

[2] [If hypercritically examined, *refrain* is not, perhaps, the word which exactly gives Mr. Boswell's meaning. The late Mr. Richard Warton, Secretary of the Treasury, and author of the poem of *Roncesvalles*, used to express the idea with more verbal accuracy, by saying that he would *abstain*, but found it hard to *refrain*.—ED.]

praising "*Gordon's palates*" (a dish of palates at the honourable Alexander Gordon's) with a warmth of expression which might have done honour to more important subjects. "As for Maclaurin's imitation of a *made dish*, it was a wretched attempt[1]." He about the same time was so much displeased with the performances of a nobleman's French cook, that he exclaimed with vehemence, "I'd throw such a rascal into the river:" and he then proceeded to alarm a lady at whose house he was to sup, by the following manifesto of his skill: "I, madam, who live at a variety of good tables, am a much better judge of cookery than any person who has a very tolerable cook, but lives much at home; for his palate is gradually adapted to the taste of his cook: whereas, madam, in trying by a wider range, I can more exquisitely judge." When invited to dine, even with an intimate friend, he was not pleased if something better than a plain dinner was not prepared for him. I have heard him say on such an occasion, "This was a good dinner enough, to be sure; but it was not a dinner to *ask* a man to." On the other hand, he was wont to express, with great glee, his satisfaction when he had been entertained quite to his mind. One day when he had dined with his neighbour and landlord, in Bolt-court, Mr. Allen, the printer, whose old housekeeper had studied his taste in every thing, he pronounced this eulogy: "Sir, we could not have had a better dinner, had there been a *synod of cooks*."

[Johnson's notions about eating, however, were nothing less than delicate; a leg of pork boiled till it Piozzi, p. 78.

[1] [On returning to Edinburgh, after the tour to the Hebrides, he dined one day at Mr. Maclaurin's, and supped at the Honourable Alexander Gordon's: the former was son of the celebrated mathematician, and, in 1787, became a Lord of Session, by the title of Lord Dreghorn; the latter was third son of the second Earl of Aberdeen, and, in 1788, he also was made a Lord of Session, and took the title of Lord Rockville.—ED.]

Piozzi, p. 78,79. dropped from the bone, a veal pie with plums and sugar, or the outside cut of a salt buttock of beef, were his favourite dainties: with regard to drink, his liking was for the strongest, as it was not the flavour, but the effect he sought for, and professed to desire; and when Mrs. Piozzi first knew him, he used to pour capillaire into his port wine. For the last twelve years, however, he left off all fermented liquors. To make himself some amends indeed, he took his chocolate liberally, pouring in large quantities of cream, or even melted butter; and was so fond of fruit, that though he would eat seven or eight large peaches of a morning before breakfast began, and treated them with proportionate attention after dinner again, yet he has been heard to protest, that he never had quite as much as he wished of wall-fruit, except once in his life, and that was when he and the Thrales were all together at Ombersley, the seat of Lord Sandys; and yet when his Irish friend Grierson, hearing him enumerate the qualities necessary to the formation of a *poet*, began a comical parody upon his ornamented harangue in praise of a *cook*, concluding with this observation, that he who dressed a good dinner was a more excellent and more useful member of society than he who wrote a good poem. "And in this opinion," said Dr. Johnson, in reply, "all the dogs in the town will join you."

Piozzi, p. 89,90.

Piozzi, p. 115. Mrs. Piozzi also relates that he used often to say in her hearing, perhaps for her edification, "that wherever the dinner is ill got up there is poverty, or there is avarice, or there is stupidity; in short, the family is somehow grossly wrong: for," continued he, "a man seldom thinks with more earnestness of any thing than he does of his dinner; and if he cannot get that well dressed, he should be suspected of inaccuracy in other things." One day, when he was speaking

upon the subject, Mrs. Piozzi asked him, if he ever huffed his wife about his dinner? "So often," replied he, "that at last she called to me, when about to say grace, and said, 'Nay, hold, Mr. Johnson, and do not make a farce of thanking God for a dinner which in a few minutes you will pronounce not eatable.'"] Piozzi, p. 115.

While we were left by ourselves, after the Dutchman had gone to bed, Dr. Johnson talked of that studied behaviour which many have recommended and practised. He disapproved of it; and said, "I never considered whether I should be a grave man, or a merry man, but just let inclination, for the time, have its course."

He flattered me with some hopes that he would, in the course of the following summer, come over to Holland, and accompany me in a tour through the Netherlands.

I teased him with fanciful apprehensions of unhappiness. A moth having fluttered round the candle, and burnt itself, he laid hold of this little incident to admonish me; saying, with a sly look, and in a solemn but a quiet tone, "That creature was its own tormentor, and I believe its name was BOSWELL."

Next day we got to Harwich, to dinner; and my passage in the packet-boat to Helvoetsluys being secured, and my baggage put on board, we dined at our inn by ourselves. I happened to say, it would be *terrible* if he should not find a speedy opportunity of returning to London, and be confined in so dull a place. JOHNSON. "Don't, sir, accustom yourself to use big words for little matters[1]. It would *not* be

[1] [This advice comes drolly from the writer, who makes a young lady talk of "the *cosmetic discipline*," "a regular *lustration* with bean-flower water, and the use of a pommade to *discuss* pimples and clear *discoloration*."—*Ramb. No.* 130: while a young gentleman tells us of "the *flaccid* sides of a football having swelled out into stiffness and extension."—No. 117. And it is equally amusing to find Mr. Boswell, after his various defences of Johnson's *grandiloquence*, attacking

terrible, though I *were* to be detained some time here." The practice of using words of disproportionate magnitude, is, no doubt, too frequent every where; but, I think, most remarkable among the French, of which, all who have travelled in France must have been struck with innumerable instances.

We went and looked at the church, and having gone into it, and walked up to the altar, Johnson, whose piety was constant and fervent, sent me to my knees, saying, "Now that you are going to leave your native country, recommend yourself to the protection of your CREATOR and REDEEMER."

After we came out of the church, we stood talking for some time together of Bishop Berkeley's ingenious sophistry to prove the non-existence of matter, and that every thing in the universe is merely ideal. I observed, that though we are satisfied his doctrine is not true, it is impossible to refute it. I never shall forget the alacrity with which Johnson answered, striking his foot with mighty force against a large stone, till he rebounded from it, "I refute it *thus*[1]." This was a stout exemplification of the *first truths* of *Père Bouffier*, or the *original principles* of Reid and of Beattie; without admitting which, we can no more argue in metaphysicks, than we can argue in mathematicks without axioms. To me it is not conceivable how Berkeley can be answered by pure reasoning; but I know that the nice and difficult task was to have been undertaken by one[2] of the

the little inflations of French conversation; straining at a gnat, after having swallowed a camel.—ED.]

[1] Dr. Johnson seems to have been imperfectly acquainted with Berkeley's doctrine: as his experiment only proves that we have the sensation of solidity, which Berkeley did not deny. He admitted that we had sensations or ideas that are usually called sensible qualities, one of which is solidity: he only denied the existence of *matter*, i. e. an inert senseless substance, in which they are supposed to subsist. Johnson's exemplification concurs with the vulgar notion, that solidity is matter.—KEARNEY.

[2] [Mr. Burke.—ED.]

most luminous minds of the present age, had not politicks "turned him from calm philosophy aside." What an admirable display of subtilty, united with brilliance, might his contending with Berkeley have afforded us! How must we, when we reflect on the loss of such an intellectual feast, regret that he should be characterised as the man,

> "Who born for the universe narrow'd his mind,
> And to party gave up what was meant for mankind[1]?"

My revered friend walked down with me to the beach, where we embraced and parted with tenderness, and engaged to correspond by letters. I said, "I hope, sir, you will not forget me in my absence." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, it is more likely you should forget me, than that I should forget you." As the vessel put out to sea, I kept my eyes upon him for a considerable time, while he remained rolling his majestick frame in his usual manner; and at last I perceived him walk back into the town, and he disappeared.

Utrecht seeming at first very dull to me, after the animated scenes of London, my spirits were grievously affected; and I wrote to Johnson a plaintive and desponding letter, to which he paid no regard. Afterwards, when I had acquired a firmer tone of mind, I wrote him a second letter, expressing much anxiety to hear from him. At length I received the following epistle, which was of important service to me, and, I trust, will be so to many others.

"A MR. BOSWELL, *à la Cour de l'Empereur, Utrecht.*

"London, 8th Dec., 1763.

"DEAR SIR,—You are not to think yourself forgotten, or criminally neglected, that you have had yet no letter from me.

[1] [In the latter years of his life Mr. Burke reversed the conduct which Goldsmith so elegantly reprehends, and *gave up party* for what he conceived to be the good of *mankind*.—ED.]

I love to see my friends, to hear from them, to talk to them, and to talk of them; but it is not without a considerable effort of resolution that I prevail upon myself to write. I would not, however, gratify my own indolence by the omission of any important duty, or any office of real kindness.

"To tell you that I am or am not well, that I have or have not been in the country, that I drank your health in the room in which we last sat together, and that your acquaintance continue to speak of you with their former kindness, topicks with which those letters are commonly filled which are written only for the sake of writing, I seldom shall think worth communicating; but if I can have it in my power to calm any harassing disquiet, to excite any virtuous desire, to rectify any important opinion, or fortify any generous resolution, you need not doubt but I shall at least wish to prefer the pleasure of gratifying a friend much less esteemed than yourself, before the gloomy calm of idle vacancy. Whether I shall easily arrive at an exact punctuality of correspondence, I cannot tell. I shall, at present, expect that you will receive this in return for two which I have had from you. The first, indeed, gave me an account so hopeless of the state of your mind, that it hardly admitted or deserved an answer; by the second I was much better pleased; and the pleasure will still be increased by such a narrative of the progress of your studies, as may evince the continuance of an equal and rational application of your mind to some useful inquiry.

"You will, perhaps, wish to ask, what study I would recommend. I shall not speak of theology, because it ought not to be considered as a question whether you shall endeavour to know the will of God.

"I shall, therefore, consider only such studies as we are at liberty to pursue or to neglect; and of these I know not how you will make a better choice, than by studying the civil law, as your father advises, and the ancient languages, as you had determined for yourself; at least resolve, while you remain in any settled residence, to spend a certain number of hours every day amongst your books. The dissipation of thought of which you complain is nothing more than the vacillation of a mind suspended between different motives, and changing its direction as any motive gains or loses strength. If you can but kindle in your mind any strong desire, if you can but keep predominant any wish for some particular excellence or attainment, the gusts of imagination will break away, without any effect upon your conduct, and commonly without any traces left upon the memory.

"There lurks, perhaps, in every human heart a desire of distinction, which inclines every man first to hope, and then to believe, that nature has given him something peculiar to himself. This vanity makes one mind nurse aversions, and another actuate desires, till they rise by art much above their original state of power: and as affectation, in time, improves to habit, they at last tyrannise over him who at first encouraged them only for show. Every desire is a viper in the bosom, who, while he was chill, was harmless; but when warmth gave him strength, exerted it in poison. You know a gentleman [1], who, when first he set his foot in the gay world, as he prepared himself to whirl in the vortex of pleasure, imagined a total indifference and universal negligence to be the most agreeable concomitants of youth, and the strongest indication of an airy temper and a quick apprehension. Vacant to every object, and sensible of every impulse, he thought that all appearance of diligence would deduct something from the reputation of genius; and hoped that he should appear to attain, amidst all the ease of carelessness, and all the tumults of diversion, that knowledge and those accomplishments which mortals of the common fabrick obtain only by mute abstraction and solitary drudgery. He tried this scheme of life awhile, was made weary of it by his sense and his virtue; he then wished to return to his studies; and finding long habits of idleness and pleasure harder to be cured than he expected, still willing to retain his claim to some extraordinary prerogatives, resolved the common consequences of irregularity into an unalterable degree of destiny, and concluded that nature had originally formed him incapable of rational employment.

"Let all such fancies, illusive and destructive, be banished henceforward from your thoughts for ever. Resolve, and keep your resolution; choose, and pursue your choice. If you spend this day in study, you will find yourself still more able to study to-morrow; not that you are to expect that you shall at once obtain a complete victory. Depravity is not very easily overcome. Resolution will sometimes relax, and diligence will sometimes be interrupted; but let no accidental surprise or deviation, whether short or long, dispose you to despondency. Consider these failings as incident to all mankind. Begin again where you left off, and endeavour to avoid the seducements that prevailed over you before.

[1] [This perhaps was meant for Mr. Langton, whose indolence and aversion from business Johnson often endeavoured to correct; but Mr. Langton was very studious, and had attained a deep knowledge of Greek. The early dissipation seems to suit the character of Beauclerk, but *his* return to the sobrieties of life did not take place so early as this date.—Ed.]

"This, my dear Boswell, is advice which, perhaps, has been often given you, and given you without effect. But this advice, if you will not take from others, you must take from your own reflections, if you purpose to do the duties of the station to which the bounty of providence has called you.

"Let me have a long letter from you as soon as you can. I hope you continue your journal, and enrich it with many observations upon the country in which you reside. It will be a favour if you can get me any books in the Frisick language, and can inquire how the poor are maintained in the Seven Provinces. I am, dear sir, your most affectionate servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

I am sorry to observe, that neither in my own minutes, nor in my letters to Johnson which have been preserved by him, can I find any information how the poor are maintained in the Seven Provinces. But I shall extract from one of my letters what I learnt concerning the other subject of his curiosity.

"I have made all possible inquiry with respect to the Frisick language, and find that it has been less cultivated than any other of the northern dialects; a certain proof of which is their deficiency of books. Of the old Frisick there are no remains, except some ancient laws preserved by Schotanus in his '*Beschryvinge van die Heerlykheid van Friesland*;' and his '*Historia Frisica*.' I have not yet been able to find these books. Professor Trotz, who formerly was of the University of Vranyken in Friesland, and is at present preparing an edition of all the Frisick laws, gave me this information. Of the modern Frisick, or what is spoken by the boors of this day, I have procured a specimen. It is Gisbert Japix's '*Rymelerie*,' which is the only book that they have. It is amazing that they have no translation of the Bible, no treatises of devotion, nor even any of the ballads and story-books which are so agreeable to country people. You shall have Japix by the first convenient opportunity. I doubt not to pick up

Schotanus. Mynheer Trotz has promised me his assistance."

Early in 1764 Johnson paid a visit to the Langton family, at their seat of Langton in Lincolnshire, where he passed some time, much to his satisfaction. His friend, Bennet Langton, it will not be doubted, did every thing in his power to make the place agreeable to so illustrious a guest; and the elder Mr. Langton and his lady, being fully capable of understanding his value, were not wanting in attention. He, however, told me, that old Mr. Langton, though a man of considerable learning[1], had so little allowance to make for his occasional "laxity of talk," that because in the course of discussion he sometimes mentioned what might be said in favour of the peculiar tenets of the Romish church, he went to his grave believing him to be of that communion.

Johnson, during his stay at Langton, had the advantage of a good library, and saw several gentlemen of the neighbourhood. I have obtained from Mr. Langton the following particulars of this period.

He was now fully convinced that he could not have been satisfied with a country living; for talking of a respectable clergyman in Lincolnshire, he observed, "This man, sir, fills up the duties of his life well. I approve of him, but could not imitate him."

To a lady who endeavoured to vindicate herself from blame for neglecting social attention to worthy neighbours, by saying, "I would go to them if it would do them any good;" he said, "What good, madam, do you expect to have in your power to do them? It is showing them respect, and that is doing them good."

So socially accommodating was he, that once when

[1] [See *post*, April, 1776, an anecdote that does not say much for Mr. Langton's learning, or even his understanding.—ED.]

Mr. Langton and he were driving together in a coach, and Mr. Langton complained of being sick, he insisted that they should go out, and sit on the back of it in the open air, which they did. And being sensible how strange the appearance must be, observed, that a countryman whom they saw in a field would probably be thinking, "If these two madmen should come down, what would become of me?"

Soon after his return to London, which was in February, was founded that CLUB which existed long without a name, but at Mr. Garrick's funeral became distinguished by the title of THE LITERARY CLUB. Sir Joshua Reynolds had the merit of being the first proposer of it, to which Johnson [who called Sir Joshua their *Romulus*] acceded; and the original members were, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Dr. Johnson, Mr. Edmund Burke, Dr. Nugent, Mr. Beauclerk, Mr. Langton, Dr. Goldsmith, Mr. Chamier, and Sir John Hawkins. [It was Johnson's original intention, that the number of this club should not exceed nine, but Mr. Dyer, a member of that in Ivy-lane before spoken of, and who for some years had been abroad, made his appearance among them, and was cordially received.

Piozzi, p. 94.

Hawk. p. 423, 424.

The hours which Johnson spent in this society seemed to be the happiest of his life. He would often applaud his own sagacity in the selection of it, and was so constant at its meetings as never to absent himself. It is true he came late, but then he stayed late, for, as has been already said of him, he little regarded hours. The evening toast was the motto of Padre Paolo, "Esto perpetua." A *lady*[1], distinguished by her beauty, and taste for literature, invited the club twice to a dinner at her house, which

[1] [Probably Mrs. Montagu.—ED.]

Hawkins alone was hindered from accepting. Curiosity was her motive, and possibly a desire of intermingling with their conversation the charms of her own. She affected to consider them as a set of literary men, and perhaps gave the first occasion for distinguishing the society by the name of the *Literary Club*, an appellation which it never assumed to itself.

At these meetings, Johnson, as indeed he did every where, led the conversation, yet was he far from arrogating to himself that superiority, which, some years before, he was disposed to contend for. He had seen enough of the world to know, that respect was not to be extorted, and began now to be satisfied with that degree of eminence to which his writings had exalted him. This change in his behaviour was remarked by those who were best acquainted with his character, and it rendered him an easy and delightful companion. The discourse was miscellaneous, but chiefly literary. Politics were alone excluded.] They met at the Turk's-head, in Gerrard-street, Soho, one evening in every week, at seven, and generally continued their conversation till a pretty late hour. [It was a supper-meeting then, on a Friday night, and Dr. Nugent, [who was a Roman Catholic,] would sometimes order an omelet; and Johnson felt very painful sensations at the sight of that dish soon after Nugent's death, and cried, "Ah, my poor dear friend, I shall never eat omelet with *thee* again!" quite in an agony[1]. The truth is, nobody suffered more from pungent sorrow at a friend's death[2] than Johnson, though he would suffer no one to complain of their losses in the same way. "For," said he, "we must either outlive our friends, you know, or our friends

Piozzi, p. 94.

[1] [This association of the *omelet* and the *agony*, so gravely told, is too characteristic, and, at all events, too droll to be omitted.—Ed.]

[2] [See, however, *post*, 28th March, 1776.—Ed.]

Piozzi, p. 94. must outlive us: and I see no man that would hesitate about the choice."] This club has been gradually increased to its present [1791] number, thirty-five. After about ten years, instead of supping weekly, it was resolved to dine together once a fortnight during the meeting of parliament. Their original tavern having been converted into a private house, they moved first to Prince's in Sackville-street, then to Le Telier's in Dover-street, and now meet at Parsloe's, St. James's-street[1].

Hawk. p. 425. Sir John Hawkins represents himself as a "*seceder*" from this society, and assigns as the reason of his "*withdrawing*" himself from it, that its late hours were inconsistent with his domestick arrangements. In this he is not accurate; for the fact was, that he one evening attacked Mr. Burke in so rude a manner, that all the company testified their displeasure; and at their next meeting his reception was such that he never came again[2].

He is equally inaccurate with respect to Mr.
P. 425. Garrick, of whom he says, "he trusted that the least intimation of a desire to come among us would procure him a ready admission;" but in this he was mistaken. Johnson consulted me upon it; and when I could find no objection to receiving him, exclaimed, "He will disturb us by his buffoonery;"—and afterwards so managed matters, that he was never formally proposed, and, by consequence, never admitted[3].

[1] The Club, some years after Mr. Boswell's death, removed (in 1799) from Parsloe's to the Thatched-house in St. James's-street, where they still continue to meet.—MALONE. [A paragraph of Mr. Boswell's text and a long note of Mr. Malone's, giving lists of the CLUB at several periods, are here omitted, as a full list of all its members, from its foundation to the present time, will be given in the appendix.—ED.]

[2] From Sir Joshua Reynolds.—BOSWELL. The knight having refused to pay his portion of the reckoning for supper, because he usually eat no supper at home, Johnson observed, "Sir John, sir, is a very *unclubable* man."—BURNEY. [Here is some mistake. Hawkins was not knighted till long after he had left the club.—ED.]

[3] [Hawkins probably meant "never" *while he himself belonged to the Club.* But surely Mr. Boswell must have been conscious that his own words—"when

In justice both to Mr. Garrick and Dr. Johnson, I think it necessary to rectify this mis-statement. The truth is, that not very long after the institution of our club, Sir Joshua Reynolds was speaking of it to Garrick. "I like it much," said he; "I think I shall be of you." When Sir Joshua mentioned this to Dr. Johnson, he was much displeased with the actor's conceit. "*He'll be of us*," said Johnson; "how does he know we will *permit* him? the first duke in England has no right to hold such language." However, when Garrick was regularly proposed some time afterwards, Johnson, though he had taken a momentary offence at his arrogance, warmly and kindly supported him, and he was accordingly elected, was a most agreeable member, and continued to attend our meetings to the time of his death.

Mrs. Piozzi has also given a similar misrepresentation of Johnson's treatment of Garrick in this particular, as if he had avowed it [to Mr. Thrale] in these contemptuous expressions: "If Garrick *does* apply, I'll black-ball him." ["Who, sir? Mr. Garrick? Your friend, your companion—black-ball *him!*" "Why, sir, I love my little David dearly, better than all or any of his flatterers do;] but, surely, one ought to sit in a society like ours, Letters, v. 2. p. 387.

'Unelbow'd by a gamester, pimp, or player.'"

I am happy to be enabled by such unquestionable authority as that of Sir Joshua Reynolds[1], as well as

Garrick was regularly proposed *some time after*, Johnson, though he had taken a *momentary* offence," &c.—do not give a fair account of the matter; for it was not till near *ten years* after the foundation of the Club that Garrick was admitted, and, as he died in the beginning of 1779, the Club enjoyed but for *five* years that agreeable society which, but for Johnson's opposition, they would probably have enjoyed for *fourteen* or *fifteen*.—ED.]

[1] [It does not appear how Sir Joshua Reynolds' authority can be made available in this case. The expression is stated to have been used to *Mr. Thrale;* and the *fact*, that Garrick was for near *ten* years excluded from the club, and the numberless occasions in which, according to Mr. Boswell's own account, Johnson spoke in the most contemptuous manner of Garrick, seem to give but too much colour to this sad story.—ED.]

from my own knowledge, to vindicate at once the heart of Johnson and the social merit of Garrick.

In this year, except what he may have done in revising Shakspeare, we do not find that he laboured much in literature. He wrote a review of Granger's "Sugar Cane," a poem, in the London Chronicle. He told me, that Dr. Percy wrote the greatest part of this review; but, I imagine, he did not recollect it distinctly, for it appears to be mostly, if not altogether, his own. He also wrote in the Critical Review an account † of Goldsmith's excellent poem, "The Traveller."

The ease and independence to which he had at last attained by royal munificence increased his natural indolence. In his Meditations, he thus accuses himself:

Prayers & Med. p 49. "Good Friday, April 20, 1764. I have made no reformation; I have lived totally useless, more sensual in thought, and more addicted to wine and meat."

And next morning he thus feelingly complains:

P. 50. "My indolence, since my last reception of the sacrament, has sunk into grosser sluggishness, and my dissipation spread into wilder negligence. My thoughts have been clouded with sensuality; and, except that from the beginning of this year I have, in some measure, forborne excess of strong drink, my appetites have predominated over my reason. A kind of strange oblivion has overspread me, so that I know not what has become of the last year; and perceive that incidents and intelligence pass over me without leaving any impression."

He then solemnly says,

"This is not the life to which heaven is promised;"

and he earnestly resolves an amendment.

P. 52-54. [Easter-day, 22d April, 1764.—"Having, before I went to bed, composed the foregoing meditation, and the following prayer; I tried to compose myself, but slept unquietly. I rose, took tea, and prayed for resolution and perseverance. Thought on Tetty, dear poor Tetty, with my eyes full.

"I went to church; came in at the first of the Psalms, and endeavoured to attend the service, which I went through without perturbation. After sermon, I recommended Tetty in a prayer by herself; and my father, mother, brother, and Bathurst, in another. I did it only once, so far as it might be lawful for me.

"I then prayed for resolution and perseverance to amend my life. I received soon: the communicants were many. At the altar, it occurred to me that I ought to form some resolutions. I resolved, in the presence of God, but without a vow, to repel sinful thoughts, to study eight hours daily, and, I think, to go to church every Sunday, and read the Scriptures. I gave a shilling; and seeing a poor girl at the sacrament in a bedgown, gave her privately a crown, though I saw Hart's Hymns in her hand. I prayed earnestly for amendment, and repeated my prayer at home. Dined with Miss W[illiams]; went to prayers at church; went to ———[1], spent the evening not pleasantly. Avoided wine, and tempered a very few glasses with sherbet. Came home and prayed.

"I saw at the sacrament a man meanly dressed, whom I have always seen there at Easter."]

It was his custom to observe certain days with a pious abstraction: viz. New-year's day, the day of his wife's death, Good Friday, Easter-day, and his own birthday. He this year [on his birthday] says,

"I have now spent fifty-five years in resolving; having, from the earliest time almost that I can remember, been forming schemes of a better life. I have done nothing. The need of doing, therefore, is pressing, since the time of doing is short. O God, grant me to resolve aright, and to keep my resolutions, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen." Prayers & Med. p. 57.

Such a tenderness of conscience, such a fervent desire of improvement, will rarely be found. It is, surely, not decent in those who are hardened in indifference to spiritual improvement, to treat this pious anxiety of Johnson with contempt.

About this time he was afflicted with a very severe return of the hypochondriack disorder, which was ever

[1] In the original MS., instead of this blank are the letters *Davi*, followed by some other letters, which are illegible. They, no doubt, meant either Davies the bookseller, or David Garrick; most likely the former.—HALL.

lurking about him. He was so ill, as, notwithstanding his remarkable love of company, to be entirely averse to society, the most fatal symptom of that malady. Dr. Adams told me, that as an old friend he was admitted to visit him, and that he found him in a deplorable state, sighing, groaning, talking to himself, and restlessly walking from room to room. He then used this emphatical expression of the misery which he felt: "I would consent to have a limb amputated to recover my spirits."

Talking to himself was, indeed, one of his singularities ever since I knew him [1]. I was certain that he was frequently uttering pious ejaculations; for fragments of the Lord's Prayer have been distinctly overheard [2]. His friend, Mr. Thomas Davies, of whom Churchill says,

"That Davies has a very pretty wife,—"

when Dr. Johnson muttered, "lead us not into temptation," used with waggish and gallant humour to whisper Mrs. Davies, "You, my dear, are the cause of this."

He had another particularity, of which none of his friends ever ventured to ask an explanation. It appeared to me some superstitious habit which he had contracted early, and from which he had never called upon his reason to disentangle him. This was his anxious care to go out or in at a door or passage, by a certain number of steps from a certain point, or at

[1] [See *post*, 12th Oct. 1773.—ED.]

[2] It used to be imagined at Mr. Thrale's, when Johnson retired to a window or corner of the room, by perceiving his lips in motion, and hearing a murmur without audible articulation, that he was praying; but this was not *always* the case, for I was once, perhaps unperceived by him, writing at a table, so near the place of his retreat, that I heard him repeating some lines in an ode of Horace, over and over again, as if by iteration to exercise the organs of speech, and fix the ode in his memory:

"Audiet cives accuisse ferrum
Quo graves *Persæ* melius perirent,
Audiet pugnas . . . . ."

It was during the American war.—BURNEY.

least so as that either his right or his left foot (I am not certain which), should constantly make the first actual movement when he came close to the door or passage. Thus I conjecture: for I have, upon innumerable occasions, observed him suddenly stop, and then seem to count his steps with a deep earnestness; and when he had neglected or gone wrong in this sort of magical movement, I have seen him go back again, put himself in a proper posture to begin the ceremony, and, having gone through it, break from his abstraction, walk briskly on, and join his companion [1]. A strange instance of something of this nature, even when on horseback, happened when he was in the Isle of Sky [12th Oct. 1773]. Sir Joshua Reynolds has observed him to go a good way about, rather than cross a particular alley in Leicester-fields; but this Sir Joshua imputed to his having had some disagreeable recollection associated with it.

That the most minute singularities which belonged to him, and made very observable parts of his appearance and manner, may not be omitted, it is requisite to mention, that while talking or even musing as he sat in his chair, he commonly held his head to

[1] [The following anecdote, related by Mr. Whyte, affords another curious instance of this peculiarity:

"Mr. Sheridan at one time lived in Bedford-street, opposite Henrietta-street, which ranges with the south side of Covent-garden, so that the prospect lies open the whole way free of interruption. We were standing together at the drawing-room, expecting Johnson, who was to dine there. Mr. Sheridan asked me, could I see the length of the garden? 'No, sir.' [Mr. Whyte was short-sighted.] 'Take out your opera-glass, Johnson is coming; you may know him by his gait.' I perceived him at a good distance, working along with a peculiar solemnity of deportment, and an awkward sort of measured step. At that time the broad flagging at each side the streets was not universally adopted, and stone posts were in fashion, to prevent the annoyance of carriages. Upon every post as he passed along, I could observe, he deliberately laid his hand; but missing one of them when he had got at some distance, he seemed suddenly to recollect himself, and immediately returning back, carefully performed the accustomed ceremony, and resumed his former course, not omitting one till he gained the crossing. This, Mr. Sheridan assured me, however odd it might appear, was his constant practice; but why or wherefore he could not inform me." *Miscell. Nova.* p. 49. See (*ante*, p. 116) his conduct at Mr. Bankes's, which seems something of the same kind.—Ed.]

one side towards his right shoulder, and shook it in a tremulous manner, moving his body backwards and forwards, and rubbing his left knee in the same direction with the palm of his hand. In the intervals of articulating he made various sounds with his mouth; sometimes as if ruminating, or what is called chewing the cud, sometimes giving a half whistle, sometimes making his tongue play backwards from the roof of his mouth, as if clucking like a hen, and sometimes protruding it against his upper gums in front, as if pronouncing quickly under his breath, *too, too, too:* all this accompanied sometimes with a thoughtful look, but more frequently with a smile. Generally when he had concluded a period, in the course of a dispute, by which time he was a good deal exhausted by violence and vociferation, he used to blow out his breath like a whale. This I suppose was a relief to his lungs; and seemed in him to be a contemptuous mode of expression, as if he had made the arguments of his opponent fly like chaff before the wind.

I am fully aware how very obvious an occasion I here give for the sneering jocularity of such as have no relish of an exact likeness; which, to render complete, he who draws it must not disdain the slightest strokes. But if witlings should be inclined to attack this account, let them have the candour to quote what I have offered in my defence.

Pearson MSS. [" DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. LUCY PORTER.

" London, 10 Jan. 1764.

" My dear,—I was in hopes that you would have written to me before this time, to tell me that your house was finished, and that you were happy in it. I am sure I wish you happy.

" By the carrier of this week you will receive a box, in which I have put some books, most of which were your poor dear mamma's, and a diamond ring[1], which I hope you will wear as

[1] [This ring is now in the possession of Mrs. Pearson.—Harwood.]

my new year's gift. If you receive it with as much kindness as I send it, you will not slight it; you will be very fond of it. Pearson MSS.

"Pray give my service to Kitty, who, I hope, keeps pretty well. I know not now when I shall come down; I believe it will not be very soon. But I shall be glad to hear of you from time to time.

"I wish you, my dearest, many happy years; take what care you can of your health. I am, my dear, your affectionate humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

He was for some time in the summer at Easton Maudit, Northamptonshire, on a visit to the Reverend Dr. Percy, now Bishop of Dromore. Whatever dissatisfaction he felt at what he considered as a slow progress in intellectual improvement, we find that his heart was tender, and his affections warm, as appears from the following very kind letter:

"TO JOSHUA REYNOLDS, ESQ. IN LEICESTER-FIELDS.

"DEAR SIR,—I did not hear of your sickness till I heard likewise of your recovery, and therefore escaped that part of your pain, which every man must feel to whom you are known, as you are known to me.

"Having had no particular account of your disorder, I know not in what state it has left you. If the amusement of my company can exhilarate the languor of a slow recovery, I will not delay a day to come to you; for I know not how I can so effectually promote my own pleasure as by pleasing you, or my own interest as by preserving you, in whom, if I should lose you, I should lose almost the only man whom I call a friend.

"Pray let me hear of you from yourself, or from dear Miss Reynolds[1]. Make my compliments to Mr. Mudge. I am, dear sir, your most affectionate and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON.

"At the Rev. Mr. Percy's, at Easton Maudit, Northamptonshire (by Castle Ashby), 19 Aug. 1764."

[1] Sir Joshua's sister, for whom Johnson had a particular affection, and to whom he wrote many letters which I have seen, and which I am sorry her too nice delicacy will not permit to be published.—BOSWELL. [One will be found added by Mr. Malone, *post*, 21st July, 1781.—Of Miss Reynolds Johnson thought so highly, that he once said to Mrs. Piozzi, "I never knew but one mind which would bear a microscopical examination, and that is dear Miss Reynolds's, and hers is very near to purity itself." *Piozzi*, p. 68.—ED.]

Early in the year 1765 he paid a short visit to the university of Cambridge, with his friend Mr. Beauclerk. There is a lively picturesque account of his behaviour on this visit, in the Gentleman's Magazine for March, 1785, being an extract of a letter [1] from the late Dr. John Sharp [2].

" Cambridge, 1 March, 1765.

Gent. Mag. vol. 55. p. 173.

["As to Johnson, you will be surprised to hear that I have had him in the chair in which I am now writing. He has ascended my aërial citadel. He came down on a Saturday evening, with a Mr. Beauclerk, who has a friend at Trinity [3]. *Caliban*, you may be sure, was not roused from his lair before next day noon, and his breakfast probably kept him till night. I saw nothing of him, nor was he heard of by any one, till Monday afternoon, when I was sent for home to two gentlemen unknown In conversation I made a strange *faux pas* about Burnaby Greene's poem [4], in which Johnson is drawn at full length.] He drank his large potation of tea with me, interrupted by many an indignant contradiction, and many a noble sentiment. [He had on a better wig than usual, but one whose curls were not, like Sir Cloudesley's, formed for 'eternal buckle [5].' Our conversation was chiefly on books, you may be sure. He was much pleased with a small Milton of mine, published in the author's lifetime, and with the Greek epigram on his own effigy, of its being the picture, not of him, but of a bad painter. There are many manuscript stanzas, for ought I know, in Milton's own handwriting, and several interlined hints and fragments. We were puzzled about one of the sonnets, which we thought was not to be found in Newton's edition, and differed from all the printed ones. But Johnson cried, 'No! no!' repeated the whole sonnet instantly, *memoriter*, and showed it us in Newton's book. After which he learnedly harangued on sonnet-writing, and its different numbers. He tells me he will come hither again quickly, and is

[1] [Of this letter Mr. Boswell quotes only two short paragraphs, adding that "they are very characteristical," but surely the rest is equally so.—Ed.]

[2] [No doubt Dr. John Sharp, grandson of Sharp, Archbishop of York, and son of the Archdeacon of Durham, in which preferment he succeeded his father. He was a member of Trinity College, Cambridge. He died in 1792, aged 69. —Ed.]

[3] Mr. Lister.—Boswell.

[4] [Edward Burnaby, who took the name of Greene, published, in 1756, an imitation of the 10th Ep. of the first book of Horace. He died in 1788.—Ed.]

[5] "Eternal buckle take in Parian stone."—Pope.

promised 'an habitation in Emanuel college.' He went back to town next morning; but as it began to be known that he was in the university,] several persons got into his company the last evening at Trinity, where, about twelve, he began to be very great; stripped poor Mrs. Macaulay to the very skin, then gave her for his toast, and drank her in two bumpers."

The strictness of his self-examination, and scrupulous Christian humility, appear in his pious meditation on Easter-day this year.

"I purpose again to partake of the blessed sacrament; yet when I consider how vainly I have hitherto resolved at this annual commemoration of my Saviour's death, to regulate my life by his laws, I am almost afraid to renew my resolutions." Prayers & Med. p. 60.

"Since the last Easter I have reformed no evil habit; my time has been unprofitably spent, and seems as a dream that has left nothing behind. *My memory grows confused, and I know not how the days pass over me.* Good Lord, deliver me!"

The concluding words [of the last sentence] are very remarkable, and show that he laboured under a severe depression of spirits. [He proceeds:]

["I purpose to rise at eight, because, though I shall not yet rise early, it will be much earlier than I now rise, for I often lie till two, and will gain me much time, and tend to a conquest over idleness, and give time for other duties. I hope to rise yet earlier." Prayers and Med. p. 61.

"I invited home with me the man[1] whose pious behaviour I had for several years observed on this day, and found him a kind of Methodist, full of texts, but ill-instructed. I talked to him with temper, and offered him twice wine, which he refused. I suffered him to go without the dinner which I had purposed to give him. I thought this day that there was something irregular and particular in his look and gesture; but having intended to invite him to acquaintance, and having a fit opportunity by finding him near my own seat after I had missed him, I did what I at first designed, and am sorry to have been so much disappointed. Let me not be prejudiced hereafter against the appearance of piety in mean persons, who, P.63,64.

[1] [See *ante*, p. 495.—ED.]

with indeterminate notions, and perverse or inelegant conversation, perhaps are doing all they can."]

ED. [The following letter was addressed to the son of his friend Mr. Strahan, afterwards prebendary of Rochester, and the Editor of Johnson's *Prayers and Meditations.*

"TO MR. G. STRAHAN, UNIVER. COLL. OX.[1]

"25 May, 1765.

"DEAR SIR,—That I have answered neither of your letters you must not impute to any declension of good will, but merely to the want of something to say. I suppose you pursue your studies diligently, and diligence will seldom fail of success. Do not tire yourself so much with Greek one day as to be afraid of looking on it the next; but give it a certain portion of time, suppose four hours, and pass the rest of the day in Latin or English. I would have you learn French, and take in a literary journal once a month, which will accustom you to various subjects, and inform you what learning is going forward in the world. Do not omit to mingle some lighter books with those of more importance; that which is read *remisso animo* is often of great use, and takes great hold of the remembrance. However, take what course you will, if you be diligent you will be a scholar. I am, dear sir, yours affectionately,

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

No man was more gratefully sensible of any kindness done to him than Johnson. There is a little circumstance in his diary this year, which shows him in a very amiable light.

"July 2.—I paid Mr. Simpson ten guineas, which he had formerly lent me in my necessity, and for which Tetty expressed her gratitude."

"July 8.—I lent Mr. Simpson ten guineas more."

Here he had a pleasing opportunity of doing the same kindness to an old friend, which he had formerly received from him. Indeed his liberality as to money was very remarkable. The next article in his diary is,

[1] [This letter has been communicated to Dr. Hall, for the use of this edition, by the kindness of the Rev. Charles Rose, Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford.—ED.]

"July 16th, I received seventy-five pounds[1]. Lent Mr. Davies twenty-five."

Trinity college, Dublin, at this time, surprised Johnson with a spontaneous compliment of the highest academical honours, by creating him doctor of laws. The diploma, which is in my possession, is as follows:

"*Omnibus ad quos præsentes literæ pervenerint, salutem. Nos Præpositus et Socii Seniores Collegii sacrosanctæ et individuæ Trinitatis Reginæ Elizabethæ juxta Dublin, testamur,* Samueli Johnson, *Armigero, ob egregiam scriptorum elegantiam et utilitatem, gratiam concessam fuisse pro gradu Doctoratûs in utroque Jure, octavo die Julii, Anno Domini millesimo septingentesimo sexagesimo-quinto. In cujus rei testimonium singulorum manus et sigillum quo in hisce utimur apposuimus, vicesimo tertio die Julii, Anno Domini millesimo septingentesimo sexagesimo-quinto.*

GUL. CLEMENT. FRAN. ANDREWS. R. MURRAY.
THO. WILSON. *Præps.* ROB^tus LAW.
THO. LELAND. [2] MICH. KEARNEY."

This unsolicited mark of distinction, conferred on so great a literary character, did much honour to the judgment and liberal spirit of that learned body. Johnson acknowledged the favour in a letter to Dr. Leland, one of their number; but I have not been able to obtain a copy of it.

[After the publication of the edition in 1804, a copy of this letter was communicated to Mr. Malone by John Leland, esq. son to the learned historian, to whom it is addressed. Malone.

"TO THE REV. DR. LELAND.

"Johnson's-court, Fleet-street,
London, 17 Oct. 1765[3].

"SIR,—Among the names subscribed to the degree which I have had the honour of receiving from the University of Dublin,

[1] [Probably a quarter's pension.—ED.]
[2] [The same who has contributed some notes to the late editions of this work. He was the elder brother of the late Bishop of Ossory.—ED.]
[3] [Hawkins and Murphy seem to think that the degree followed the publication of Shakspeare, but the former was, we see, in July (the annual *Commencement*), and the latter in October: Johnson's acknowledgment of the honour was perhaps postponed to the end of the academic vacation.—ED.]

I find none of which I have any personal knowledge but those of Dr. Andrews and yourself.

"Men can be estimated by those who know them not, only as they are represented by those who know them; and therefore I flatter myself that I owe much of the pleasure which this distinction gives me to your concurrence with Dr. Andrews in recommending me to the learned society.

"Having desired the provost to return my general thanks to the university, I beg that you, sir, will accept my particular and immediate acknowledgments. I am, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON[1]."]

Hawk. p. 446.

[His great affection for our own universities, and particularly his attachment to Oxford, prevented Johnson from receiving this honour[2] as it was intended, and he never assumed the title which it conferred. He was as little pleased to be called Doctor in consequence of it, as he was with the title of *domine*, which a friend of his once incautiously addressed him by. He thought it alluded to his having been a schoolmaster; and though he has ably vindicated Milton from the reproach that Salmasius meant to fix on him, by saying that he was of that profession, he wished to have it forgot, that himself had ever been driven to it as the means of subsistence, and had failed in the attempt.]

He appears this year to have been seized with a temporary fit of ambition, for he had thoughts both of studying law, and of engaging in politicks. His "Prayer before the Study of Law" is truly admirable:

Prayers & Med. p. 67.

"26 Sept. 1765.

"Almighty God, the giver of wisdom, without whose help resolutions are vain, without whose blessing study is ineffectual; enable me, if it be thy will, to attain such knowledge as may qualify me to direct the doubtful, and instruct the ignorant; to prevent wrongs and terminate contentions; and grant that I

[1] I have not been able to recover the letter which Johnson wrote to Dr. Andrews on this occasion.—MALONE.

[2] [This is a mistake of Hawkins, which Murphy also adopts. Mr. Boswell states, (*post*, 7th April, 1775, *n.*) that Johnson, himself, *never* used the title of *Doctor* before his name, even after his Oxford degree.—ED.]

may use that knowledge which I shall attain, to thy glory and my own salvation, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

His prayer in the view of becoming a politician is entitled "Engaging in POLITICKS with H——n," no doubt, his friend, the Right Honourable William Gerard Hamilton[1], for whom, during a long acquaintance, he had a great esteem, and to whose conversation he once paid this high compliment: "I am very unwilling to be left alone, sir, and therefore I go with my company down the first pair of stairs, in some hopes that they may, perhaps, return again; I go with you, sir, as far as the street-door." In what particular department he intended to engage[2] does not appear, nor can Mr. Hamilton explain. His prayer is in general terms.

"Enlighten my understanding with knowledge of right, and govern my will by thy laws, that no deceit may mislead me, nor temptation corrupt me; that I may always endeavour to do good, and hinder evil." Prayers & Med. p. 67.

There is nothing upon the subject in his diary.

[1] [Mr. Hamilton had been secretary to Lord Halifax as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and remained a short time with his successor, Lord Northumberland, but he resigned in 1764. Though he never spoke in parliament after this, his biographer informs us (perhaps on the authority of this passage), that he meditated taking an active part in political life; he, however, did not, and his alliance with Johnson, whatever it was intended to be, seems to have produced little or nothing, at least that we know of. Mr. Hamilton died in 1796, æt. 68.—ED.]

[2] In the preface to a late collection of Mr. Hamilton's Pieces, it has been observed, that our authour was, by the generality of Johnson's words, "led to suppose that he was seized with a temporary fit of ambition, and that hence he was induced to apply his thoughts to law and politicks. But Mr. Boswell was certainly mistaken in this respect: and these words merely allude to Johnson's having at that time entered into some engagement with Mr. Hamilton occasionally to furnish him with his sentiments on the great political topicks which should be considered in parliament." In consequence of this engagement, Johnson, in November, 1766, wrote a very valuable tract, entitled "Considerations on Corn," which is printed as an appendix to the works of Mr. Hamilton, published by T. Payne in 1808.—MALONE. [It seems very improbable that so solemn a "*prayer, on engaging in politics,*" should have had no meaning. It were perhaps vain now to inquire after what Mr. Hamilton *professed* not to be able to explain; but we may be sure that it was, in Johnson's opinion, no such trivial and casual assistance as is suggested in Mr. Malone's note. From a letter to Miss Porter, (*post*, 14th January, 1766), it may be guessed, that this engagement was in some way connected with the parliamentary session, and it may have been an alliance to write pamphlets or paragraphs in favour of a particular line of politics. Whatever it was, it may be inferred, from the obscurity in which they have left it, that it was something which neither Hamilton nor Johnson choose to talk about.—ED.]

This year was distinguished by his being introduced into the family of Mr. Thrale, one of the most eminent brewers in England, and member of parliament for the borough of Southwark. Foreigners are not a little amazed, when they hear of brewers, distillers, and men in similar departments of trade, held forth as persons of considerable consequence. In this great commercial country it is natural that a situation which produces much wealth should be considered as very respectable; and, no doubt, honest industry is entitled to esteem. But, perhaps, the too rapid advances of men of low extraction tends to lessen the value of that distinction by birth and gentility, which has ever been found beneficial to the grand scheme of subordination. Johnson used to give this account of the rise of Mr. Thrale's father: "He worked at six shillings a week for twenty years in the great brewery, which afterwards was his own. The proprietor of it[1] had an only daughter, who was married to a nobleman. It was not fit that a peer should continue the business. On the old man's death, therefore, the brewery was to be sold. To find a purchaser for so large a property was a difficult matter; and, after some time, it was suggested, that it would be advisable to treat with Thrale, a sensible, active, honest man, who had been employed in the house, and to transfer the whole to him for thirty thousand pounds, security being taken upon the pro-

[1] The predecessor of old Thrale was Edmund Halsey, esq.; the nobleman who married his daughter was Lord Cobham, great uncle of the Marquis of Buckingham. But, I believe, Dr. Johnson was mistaken in assigning so very low an origin to Mr. Thrale. The clerk of St. Alban's, a very aged man, told me, that he (the elder Thrale) married a sister of Mr. Halsey. It is at least certain that the family of Thrale was of some consideration in that town: in the abbey church is a handsome monument to the memory of Mr. John Thrale, late of London, merchant, who died in 1704, aged 54; Margaret, his wife, and three of their children who died young, between the years 1676 and 1690. The arms upon this monument are, paly of eight, gules and or, impaling, ermine, on a chief indented vert, three wolves' (or gryphons') heads, or, couped at the neck:—Crest on a ducal coronet, a tree, vert.—BLAKEWAY.

perty. This was accordingly settled. In eleven years Thrale paid the purchase-money. He acquired a large fortune, and lived to be [high-sheriff of Surrey in 1733, and] member of parliament for Southwark[1] [in 1740.] But what was most remarkable was the liberality with which he used his riches. He gave his son and daughters the best education. The esteem which his good conduct procured him from the nobleman who had married his master's daughter made him be treated with much attention; and his son, both at school and at the university of Oxford, associated with young men of the first rank. His allowance from his father, after he left college, was splendid; not less than a thousand a year. This, in a man who had risen as old Thrale did, was a very extraordinary instance of generosity. He used to say, 'If this young dog does not find so much after I am gone as he expects, let him remember that he has had a great deal in my own time.'"

The son, though in affluent circumstances, had good sense enough to carry on his father's trade, which was of such extent, that I remember he once told me, he would not quit it for an annuity of ten thousand a year; "Not (said he) that I get ten thousand a year by it, but it is an estate to a family." Having left daughters only, the property was sold for the immense sum of one hundred and thirty-five thousand pounds; a magnificent proof of what may be done by fair trade in a long period of time.

There may be some who think that a new system of gentility[2] might be established, upon principles

[1] [He died in Ap. 1758, and his wife in 1760.—*Gent. Mag.*—Ed.]

[2] Mrs. Burney informs me that she heard Dr. Johnson say, "An English merchant is a new species of gentleman." He, perhaps, had in his mind the following ingenious passage in "The Conscious Lovers," Act iv. Scene ii. where Mr. Sealand thus addresses Sir John Bevil: "Give me leave to say, that we merchants are a species of gentry that have grown into the world this last century, and are as honourable, and almost as useful as you landed-folks, that have always thought yourselves so much above us; for your trading forsooth is extended no farther than a load of hay, or a fat ox. You are pleasant

totally different from what have hitherto prevailed. Our present heraldry, it may be said, is suited to the barbarous times in which it had its origin. It is chiefly founded upon ferocious merit, upon military excellence. Why, in civilized times, we may be asked, should there not be rank and honours, upon principles, which, independent of long custom, are certainly not less worthy, and which, when once allowed to be connected with elevation and precedency, would obtain the same dignity in our imagination? Why should not the knowledge, the skill, the expertness, the assiduity, and the spirited hazards of trade and commerce, when crowned with success, be entitled to give those flattering distinctions by which mankind are so universally captivated?

Such are the specious, but false arguments for a proposition which always will find numerous advocates in a nation where men are every day starting up from obscurity to wealth. To refute them is needless. The general sense of mankind cries out, with irresistible force, "*Un gentilhomme est toujours gentilhomme*[1]."

Mr. Thrale had married Miss Hesther Lynch Salusbury, of good Welsh extraction, a lady of lively talents, improved by education. That Johnson's introduction into Mr. Thrale's family, which contributed so much to the happiness of his life, was owing to her desire for his conversation, is a very probable and the general supposition: but it is not the truth. Mr. Murphy, who was intimate with Mr. Thrale, having spoken very highly of Dr. Johnson, he was

people indeed! because you are generally bred up to be lazy; therefore, I warrant you, industry is dishonourable."—BOSWELL. [If indeed Johnson called merchants a *new species of gentlemen*, he must have forgotten not only the merchants of Tyre who were "princes," and the Medici of Florence, but the Greshams, Cranfields, Osbornes, Duncombes, and so many others of England.—ED.]

[1] [This dictum is, whatever be its value, not applicable to this case, where the question is *not* whether a gentleman can ever cease to be one, but whether a plebeian can ever *become* a gentleman.—ED.]

requested to make them acquainted. This being mentioned to Johnson, he accepted of an invitation to dinner at Thrale's, and was so much pleased with his reception, both by Mr. and Mrs. Thrale, and they so much pleased with him, that his invitations to their house were more and more frequent, till at last he became one of the family, and an apartment was appropriated to him, both in their house at Southwark, and in their villa at Streatham.

Johnson had a very sincere esteem for Mr. Thrale, as a man of excellent principles, a good scholar, well skilled in trade, of a sound understanding, and of manners such as presented the character of a plain independent English 'squire. [And when, as Mrs. Piozzi tell us, with an amiable glow of gratitude, any perplexity happened to disturb Mr. Thrale's quiet, dear Dr. Johnson left him scarce a moment, and tried every artifice to amuse, as well as every argument to console him: nor is it more possible to describe than to forget his prudent, his pious attentions towards the man who had some years before certainly saved his valuable life, perhaps his reason.] Piozzi, p. 99.

As this family will frequently be mentioned in the course of the following pages, and as a false notion has prevailed that Mr. Thrale was inferiour, and in some degree insignificant, compared with Mrs. Thrale, it may be proper to give a true state of the case from the authority of Johnson himself in his own words.

"I know no man (said he), who is more master of his wife and family than Thrale. If he but holds up a finger, he is obeyed. It is a great mistake to suppose that she is above him in literary attainments. She is more flippant; but he has ten times her learning; he is a regular scholar; but her learning is that of a schoolboy in one of the lower forms." My readers may naturally wish for some representation

of the figures of this couple [1]. Mr. Thrale was tall, well proportioned, and stately. As for *madam* or *my mistress*, by which epithets Johnson used to mention Mrs. Thrale, she was short, plump, and brisk [2]. She has herself given us a lively view of the idea which Johnson had of her person, on her appearing before him in a dark-coloured gown: "You little creatures should never wear those sort of clothes, however; they are unsuitable in every way. What! have not all insects gay colours?" Mr. Thrale gave his wife a liberal indulgence, both in the choice of their company, and in the mode of entertaining them. He understood and valued Johnson, without remission, from their first acquaintance to the day of his death. Mrs. Thrale was enchanted with Johnson's conversation for its own sake, and had also a very allowable vanity in appearing to be honoured with the attention of so celebrated a man.

Piozzi, p. 279.

Nothing could be more fortunate for Johnson than this connexion. He had at Mr. Thrale's all the comforts and even luxuries of life: his melancholy was diverted, and his irregular habits lessened by association with an agreeable and well-ordered family. He was treated with the utmost respect and even affection. The vivacity of Mrs. Thrale's literary talk roused him to cheerfulness and exertion, even when they were alone. But this was not often the case; for he found here a constant succession of what gave him the highest enjoyment, the society of the learned, the witty, and the eminent in every way, who were assembled in numerous companies; called forth his wonderful powers, and gratified him with admiration, to which no man could be insensible.

[1] [The reader will not fail to observe the *tone* in which Mr. Boswell talks of "*this couple*."—ED.]

[2] [She was twenty-five years of age when this acquaintance commenced.—ED.]

[Johnson formed, says Mr. Tyers, at Streatham a room for a library, and increased by his recommendation the number of books. Here he was to be found (himself a library) when a friend called upon him; and by him the friend was sure to be introduced to the dinner-table, which Mrs. Thrale knew how to spread with the utmost plenty and elegance, and which was often adorned with such guests, that to dine there was *epulis accumbere divum*. Of Mrs. Thrale, if mentioned at all, less cannot be said, than that in one of the *latest* opinions of Johnson, "if she was not the wisest woman in the world, she was undoubtedly one of the wittiest." Besides a natural vivacity in conversation, she had reading enough, and the "gods had made her poetical." Her poem of "The Three Warnings" (the subject she owned not to be original) is highly interesting and serious, and literally comes home to every body's business and bosom. She took, or caused such care to be taken of Johnson, during an illness of continuance, that Goldsmith told her, "he owed his recovery to her attention." She moreover taught him to lay up something of his income every year.] Tyers, p. 8.

[Johnson had also at Streatham opportunities of exercise, and the pleasure of airings and excursions. In the exercise of a coach he had great delight; it afforded him the indulgence of indolent postures, and, as it seems, the noise of it assisted his hearing.] Hawk. p. 458.

[When Mrs. Piozzi asked him why he doted on a coach so, he answered, that, "in the first place, the company were *shut in* with him *there*, and could not escape as out of a room; and, in the next place, he heard all that was said in a carriage.] Piozzi, p. 218.

[He was prevailed on by Mr. Thrale to join in the pleasures of the chase, in which he showed himself a bold rider, for he either leaped, or broke through, the hedges Hawk. p. 457.

Hawk. p. 437. that obstructed him. This he did, not because he was eager in the pursuit, but, as he said, to save the trouble of alighting and remounting. He did not derive the pleasure or benefit from riding that many do: it had no tendency to raise his spirits; and he once said that, in a journey on horseback, he fell asleep.]

Piozzi, p. 159. [He certainly rode on Mr. Thrale's old hunter with a good firmness, and though he would follow the hounds fifty miles an end sometimes [1], would never own himself either tired or amused. "I have now learned," said he, "by hunting, to perceive that it is no diversion at all, nor ever takes a man out of himself for a moment: the dogs have less sagacity than I could have prevailed on myself to suppose; and the gentlemen often called to me not to ride over them. It is very strange and very melancholy, that the paucity of human pleasures should persuade us ever to call hunting one of them." He was however proud to be amongst the sportsmen; and Mrs. Piozzi thought no praise ever went so close to his heart, as when Mr. Hamilton called out one day upon Brighthelmstone Downs, "Why, Johnson rides as well, for aught I see, as the most illiterate fellow in England."]

Ed. [Mrs. Piozzi's account of the commencement and progress of this acquaintance deserves to be pre-

Piozzi, p. 95. served in her own words: ["The first time I ever saw this extraordinary man was in the year 1764, when Mr. Murphy, who had long been the friend and confidential intimate of Mr. Thrale, persuaded him to wish for Johnson's conversation, extolling it in terms which that of no other person could have deserved, till we were only in doubt how to obtain his

[1] [Mr. Boswell says, in another place, that Johnson *once* hunted; this seems more probable than Mrs. Piozzi's and Hawkins' statements, from which it would be inferred, that he hunted *habitually*. It seems hard to figure to one's self Dr. Johnson fairly joining in this violent and, to him, one would suppose, extravagant and dangerous amusement.—Ed.]

company, and find an excuse for the invitation. The celebrity of Mr. Woodhouse, a shoemaker, whose verses were at that time the subject of common discourse, soon afforded a pretence, and Mr. Murphy brought Johnson to meet him, giving me a general caution not to be surprised at his figure, dress, or behaviour. What I recollect best of the day's talk was his earnestly recommending Addison's works to Mr. Woodhouse as a model for imitation. 'Give nights and days, sir,' said he, 'to the study of Addison, if you mean either to be a good writer, or, what is more worth, an honest man.' When I saw something like the same expression in his criticism on that authour, lately published, [in the *Lives of the Poets*] I put him in mind of his past injunctions to the young poet, to which he replied, 'That he wished the shoemaker might have remembered them as well.' Mr. Johnson liked his new acquaintance so much, however, that from that time he dined with us every Thursday through the winter, and in the autumn of the next year he followed us to Brighthelmstone, whence we were gone before his arrival; so he was disappointed and enraged, and wrote us a letter expressive of anger, which we were very desirous to pacify, and to obtain his company again if possible. Mr. Murphy brought him back to us again very kindly, and from that time his visits grew more frequent, till in the year 1766 his health, which he had always complained of, grew so exceedingly bad, that he could not stir out of his room in the court he inhabited for many *weeks* together—I think *months*. Piozzi, p. 95.

"Mr. Thrale's attentions and my own now became so acceptable to him, that he often lamented to us the horrible condition of his mind, which he said was nearly distracted; and though he charged *us* to make

Piozzi, p. 98. him odd solemn promises of secrecy on so strange[1] a subject, yet when we waited on him one morning, and heard him, in the most pathetick terms, beg the prayers of Dr. Delap[2], who had left him as we came in, I felt excessively affected with grief, and well remember that my husband involuntarily lifted up one hand to shut his mouth, from provocation at hearing a man so wildly proclaim what he could at last persuade no one to believe, and what, if true, would have been so very unfit to reveal.

"Mr. Thrale went away soon after, leaving me with him, and bidding me prevail on him to quit his close habitation in the court and come with us to Streatham, where I undertook the care of his health, and had the honour and happiness of contributing to its restoration."]

Hawk. p. 440. In the October of this year he at length gave to the world his edition of Shakspeare. [He was insensible to Churchill's abuse; but the poem before mentioned had brought to remembrance, that his edition of Shakspeare had long been due. His friends took the alarm, and, by all the arts of reasoning and persuasion, laboured to convince him that having taken subscriptions for a work in which he had made no progress, his credit was at stake. He confessed he was culpable, and promised from time to time to begin a course of such reading as was necessary to qualify him for the work: this was no more than he had formerly done in an engagement with Coxeter[3], to whom he had bound himself to write the

[1] [In the second month of his acquaintance with Mr. Boswell, we have seen that Johnson communicated to him his tendency to this infirmity, yet, though he could himself be so unnecessarily candid, we shall see with what frequency and severity he used to blame Boswell when *he* presumed to mention *his* own mental distresses.—ED.]

[2] [Rector of Lewes in Sussex.—ED.]

[3] Thomas Coxeter, Esq. who had also made a large collection of plays, and

life of Shakspeare, but he never could be prevailed on to begin it, so that even now it was questioned whether his promises were to be relied on. For this reason Sir Joshua Reynolds, and some other of his friends, who were more concerned for his reputation than himself seemed to be, contrived to entangle him by a wager, or some other pecuniary engagement, to perform his task by a certain time.] This edition, if it had no other merit but that of producing his preface, in which the excellencies and defects of that immortal bard are displayed with a masterly hand, the nation would have had no reason to complain. A blind indiscriminate admiration of Shakspeare had exposed the British nation to the ridicule of foreigners. Johnson, by candidly admitting the faults of his poet, had the more credit in bestowing on him deserved and indisputable praise; and doubtless none of all his panegyrists have done him half so much honour. Their praise was like that of a counsel, upon his own side of the cause; Johnson's was like the grave, well considered, and impartial opinion of the judge, which falls from his lips with weight, and is received with reverence. What he did as a commentator has no small share of merit, though his researches were not so ample, and his investigations so acute, as they might have been; which we now certainly know from the labours of other able and ingenious criticks who have followed him. He has enriched his edition with a concise account of each play, and of its characteristick excellence. Many of his notes have illustrated obscurities in the text, and placed passages eminent

from whose manuscript notes the *Lives of the English Poets*, by Shiels and Cibber, were principally compiled. Mr. Coxeter was bred at Trinity College, Oxford, and died in London, April 17th, 1747, in his fifty-ninth year. A particular account of him may be found in *the Gentleman's Magazine* for 1781, p. 173.—MALONE. [With regard to Cibber's or Shiel's *Lives of the Poets*, see *ante*, p. 161; and *post*, 10th April, 1776, where the subject is resumed.—ED.]

for beauty in a more conspicuous light; and he has, in general, exhibited such a mode of annotation, as may be beneficial to all subsequent editors.

Piozzi, p. 44, 45. [Though he would sometimes divert himself by teasing Garrick by commendations on the tomb scene in the Mourning Bride, protesting that Shakspeare had in the same line of excellence nothing as good: "All which is strictly true," he would add, "but that is no reason for supposing that Congreve is to stand in competition with Shakspeare: these fellows know not how to blame, or how to commend." Somebody was praising Corneille one p. 153. day in opposition to Shakspeare: "Corneille is to Shakspeare," replied Johnson, "as a clipped hedge is to a forest." When he talked of authours, his praise would fall spontaneously on such passages as are sure, in his own phrase, to leave something behind them useful on common occasions, or connected with common manners. It was not Lear cursing his daughters, or deprecating the storm, that he would quote with commendation, but Iago's ingenious malice and subtle revenge; or Prince Henry's gay compliances with the vices of Falstaff, whom he all the while despised. Those plays had indeed no rivals in Johnson's favour. "No man," he said, "but Shakspeare could have drawn Sir John."]

His Shakspeare was virulently attacked by Mr. William Kenrick, who obtained the degree of LL.D. from a Scotch university, and wrote for the booksellers in a great variety of branches. Though he certainly was not without considerable merit, he wrote with so little regard to decency, and principles, and decorum, and in so hasty a manner, that his reputation was neither extensive nor lasting. I remember one evening, when some of his works were mentioned, Dr. Goldsmith said he had never heard of

them; upon which Dr. Johnson observed, "Sir, he is one of the many who have made themselves *publick*, without making themselves *known*[1]."

A young student of Oxford, of the name of Barclay, wrote an answer to Kenrick's review of Johnson's Shakspeare. Johnson was at first angry that Kenrick's attack should have the credit of an answer. But afterwards, considering the young man's good intention, he kindly noticed him, and probably would have done more, had not the young man died.

In his preface to Shakspeare, Johnson treated Voltaire very contemptuously, observing, upon some of his remarks, "These are the petty cavils of petty minds." Voltaire, in revenge, made an attack upon Johnson, in one of his numerous literary sallies which I remember to have read; but there being no general index to his voluminous works, have searched in vain, and therefore cannot quote it.

Voltaire was an antagonist with whom I thought Johnson should not disdain to contend. I pressed him to answer. He said, he perhaps might; but he never did.

[He appears, in the course of this summer, to have paid a visit to Dr. Warton, at Winchester, and, on the publication of his Shakspeare, he addressed to him the following letter:] Ed.

["DR. JOHNSON TO DR. WARTON.

"9th Oct. 1765. Wood's Life of Warton, p. 309.

"DEAR SIR,—Mrs. Warton uses me hardly in supposing that I could forget so much kindness and civility as she showed me at Winchester. I remember, likewise, our conversation about St. Cross[2]. The desire of seeing her again will be one of the motives that will bring me into Hampshire.

[1] [He died in June, 1779.—ED.]

[2] [The hospital of St. Cross, near Winchester, endowed formerly for the maintenance of 70 resident members, clergy and laity, with 100 out-pensioners; but, since the *dissolution*, reduced to 10 residents, with the master and chaplain, and 3 out-pensioners.—ED.]

"I have taken care of your book; being so far from doubting your subscription, that I think you have subscribed twice: you once paid your guinea into my own hand in the garret in Gough-square. When you light on your receipt, throw it on the fire; if you find a second receipt, you may have a second book.

"To tell the truth, as I felt no solicitude about this work, I receive no great comfort from its conclusion; but yet am well enough pleased that the publick has no farther claim upon me. I wish you would write more frequently to, dear sir, your affectionate humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

Mr. Burney having occasion to write to Johnson for some receipts for subscriptions to his Shakspeare, which Johnson had omitted to deliver when the money was paid, he availed himself of that opportunity of thanking Johnson for the great pleasure which he had received from the perusal of his preface to Shakspeare; which, although it excited much clamour against him at first, is now justly ranked among the most excellent of his writings. To this letter Johnson returned the following answer:

"TO CHARLES BURNEY, ESQ. IN POLAND-STREET.

"16th Oct. 1765.

"SIR,—I am sorry that your kindness to me has brought upon you so much trouble, though you have taken care to abate that sorrow, by the pleasure which I receive from your approbation. I defend my criticism in the same manner with you. We must confess the faults of our favourite, to gain credit to our praise of his excellencies. He that claims, either in himself or for another, the honours of perfection, will surely injure the reputation which he designs to assist.

"Be pleased to make my compliments to your family. I am, sir, your most obliged and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

From one of his journals I transcribe what follows:

"At church, Oct.—65.

"To avoid all singularity; *Bonaventura*[1].

[1] He was probably proposing to himself the model of this excellent person, who, for his piety, was named *the Seraphick Doctor*.

"To come in before service, and compose my mind by meditation, or by reading some portions of scripture. *Tetty.*

"If I can hear the sermon, to attend it, unless attention be more troublesome than useful.

"To consider the act of prayer as a reposal of myself upon God, and a resignation of all into his holy hand."

[Johnson had now arrived at the fifty-sixth year of his age, and had actually attained to that state of independence, which before he could only affect. He was now in possession of an income that freed him from the apprehensions of want, and exempted him from the necessity of mental labour. He had discharged his obligations to the public, and, with no incumbrance of a family, or any thing to control his wishes or desires, he had his mode of living to choose. Blest with what was to him a competence, he had it now in his power to study, to meditate, and to put in practice a variety of good resolutions, which, almost from his first entrance into life, he had been making.] Hawk. p. 446.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

SPECIMENS of Dr. Johnson's early poetical compositions, *referred to in p. 27.*

TRANSLATION OF VIRGIL.

PASTORAL I.

MELIBŒUS.

Now, Tityrus, you, supine and careless laid,
Play on your pipe beneath this beechen shade;
While wretched we about the world must roam,
And leave our pleasing fields and native home;
Here at your ease you sing your amorous flame,
And the wood rings with Amarillis' name.

TITYRUS.

Those blessings, friend, a deity bestow'd,
For I shall never think him less than God;
Oft on his altar shall my firstlings lie,
Their blood the consecrated stones shall dye:
He gave my flocks to graze the flowery meads,
And me to tune at ease th' unequal reeds.

MELIBŒUS.

My admiration only I exprest,
(No spark of envy harbours in my breast)
That, when confusion o'er the country reigns,
To you alone this happy state remains.
Here I, though faint myself, must drive my goats,
Far from their ancient fields and humble cots.
This scarce I lead, who left on yonder rock
Two tender kids, the hopes of all the flock.
Had we not been perverse and careless grown,
This dire event by omens was foreshown;
Our trees were blasted by the thunder stroke,
And left-hand crows, from an old hollow oak,
Foretold the coming evil by their dismal croak.

TRANSLATION OF HORACE.

BOOK I. ODE XXII.

THE man, my friend, whose conscious heart
With virtue's sacred ardour glows,
Nor taints with death the envenom'd dart,
Nor needs the guard of Moorish bows;

Though Scythia's icy cliffs he treads,
Or horrid Africk's faithless sands;
Or where the famed Hydaspes spreads
His liquid wealth o'er barbarous lands.

For while by Chloe's image charm'd,
Too far in Sabine woods I stray'd;
Me singing, careless and unarm'd,
A grisly wolf surprised, and fled.

No savage more portentous stain'd
Apulia's spacious wilds with gore;
No fiercer Juba's thirsty land,
Dire nurse of raging lions, bore.

Place me where no soft summer gale
Among the quivering branches sighs;
Where clouds condensed for ever veil
With horrid gloom the frowning skies:

Place me beneath the burning line,
A clime denied to human race:
I 'll sing of Chloe's charms divine,
Her heav'nly voice, and beauteous face.

TRANSLATION OF HORACE.

BOOK II. ODE IX.

CLOUDS do not always veil the skies,
Nor showers immerse the verdant plain;
Nor do the billows always rise,
Or storms afflict the ruffled main.

Nor, Valgius, on th' Armenian shores
Do the chain'd waters always freeze;
Not always furious Boreas roars,
Or bends with violent force the trees.

But you are ever drown'd in tears,
For Mystes dead you ever mourn;
No setting Sol can ease your care,
But finds you sad at his return.

The wise experienced Grecian sage
Mourn'd not Antilochus so long;
Nor did king Priam's hoary age
So much lament his slaughter'd son.

Leave off, at length, these woman's sighs,
Augustus' numerous trophies sing;
Repeat that prince's victories,
To whom all nations tribute bring.

Niphates rolls an humbler wave,
At length the undaunted Scythian yields,
Content to live the Roman's slave,
And scarce forsakes his native fields.

TRANSLATION OF PART OF THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN HECTOR AND ANDROMACHE,

FROM THE SIXTH BOOK OF HOMER'S ILIAD.

She ceased; then godlike Hector answer'd kind,
(His various plumage sporting in the wind)
That post, and all the rest, shall be my care;
But shall I, then, forsake the unfinish'd war?
How would the Trojans brand great Hector's name!
And one base action sully all my fame,
Acquired by wounds and battles bravely fought!
Oh! how my soul abhors so mean a thought.
Long since I learn'd to slight this fleeting breath,
And view with cheerful eyes approaching death.
The inexorable sisters have decreed
That Priam's house, and Priam's self shall bleed:
The day will come, in which proud Troy shall yield,
And spread its smoking ruins o'er the field.
Yet Hecuba's, nor Priam's hoary age,
Whose blood shall quench some Grecian's thirsty rage,
Nor my brave brothers, that have bit the ground,
Their souls dismiss'd through many a ghastly wound,
Can in my bosom half that grief create,
As the sad thought of your impending fate:

When some proud Grecian dame shall tasks impose,
Mimick your tears, and ridicule your woes;
Beneath Hyperia's waters shall you sweat,
And, fainting, scarce support the liquid weight:
Then shall some Argive loud insulting cry,
Behold the wife of Hector, guard of Troy!
Tears, at my name, shall drown those beauteous eyes,
And that fair bosom heave with rising sighs!
Before that day, by some brave hero's hand
May I lie slain, and spurn the bloody sand.

TO A YOUNG LADY ON HER BIRTHDAY[1].

This tributary verse receive, my fair,
Warm with an ardent lover's fondest prayer.
May this returning day for ever find
Thy form more lovely, more adorn'd thy mind;
All pains, all cares, may favouring heav'n remove,
All but the sweet solicitudes of love!
May powerful nature join with grateful art
To point each glance, and force it to the heart!
O then, when conquer'd crowds confess thy sway,
When ev'n proud wealth and prouder wit obey,
My fair, be mindful of the mighty trust,
Alas! 'tis hard for beauty to be just.
Those sovereign charms with strictest care employ;
Nor give the generous pain, the worthless joy:
With his own form acquaint the forward fool,
Shown in the faithful glass of ridicule;
Teach mimick censure her own faults to find,
No more let coquettes to themselves be blind,
So shall Belinda's charms improve mankind.

THE YOUNG AUTHOUR[2].

When first the peasant, long inclined to roam,
Forsakes his rural sports and peaceful home,
Pleased with the scene the smiling ocean yields,
He scorns the verdant meads and flow'ry fields;
Then dances jocund o'er the watery way,
While the breeze whispers, and the streamers play:

[1] Mr. Hector informs me, that this was made almost *impromptu*, in his presence.
[2] This he inserted, with many alterations, in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1743. He, however, did not add his name. See *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. xiii. p. 378. —Malone.

Unbounded prospects in his bosom roll,
And future millions lift his rising soul:
In blissful dreams he digs the golden mine,
And raptured sees the new-found ruby shine.
Joys insincere! thick clouds invade the skies,
Loud roar the billows, high the waves arise;
Sick'ning with fear, he longs to view the shore,
And vows to trust the faithless deep no more.
So the young authour, panting after fame,
And the long honours of a lasting name,
Intrusts his happiness to human kind,
More false, more cruel, than the seas or wind.
"Toil on, dull crowd," in ecstasies he cries,
"For wealth or title, perishable prize;
While I those transitory blessings scorn,
Secure of praise from ages yet unborn."
This thought once form'd, all counsel comes too late,
He flies to press, and hurries on his fate;
Swiftly he sees the imagined laurels spread,
And feels the unfading wreath surround his head.
Warn'd by another's fate, vain youth, be wise;
Those dreams were Settle's once, and Ogilby's:
The pamphlet spreads, incessant hisses rise,
To some retreat the baffled writer flies;
Where no sour criticks snarl, no sneers molest,
Safe from the tart harpoon, and stinging jest;
There begs of heaven a less distinguish'd lot,
Glad to be hid, and proud to be forgot.

EPILOGUE,

INTENDED TO HAVE BEEN SPOKEN BY A LADY WHO WAS TO PERSONATE THE GHOST OF HERMIONE.[1]

Ye blooming train, who give despair or joy,
Bless with a smile, or with a frown destroy;
In whose fair cheeks destructive cupids wait,
And with unerring shafts distribute fate;
Whose snowy breasts, whose animated eyes,
Each youth admires, though each admirer dies;
Whilst you deride their pangs in barb'rous play,
Unpitying see them weep, and hear them pray,
And unrelenting sport ten thousand lives away;

[1] Some young ladies at Lichfield having proposed to act "The Distressed Mother," Johnson wrote this, and gave it to Mr. Hector to convey it privately to them.

For you, ye fair, I quit the gloomy plains,
Where sable night in all her horrour reigns;
No fragrant bowers, no delightful glades,
Receive the unhappy ghosts of scornful maids.
For kind, for tender nymphs the myrtle blooms,
And weaves her bending boughs in pleasing glooms
Perennial roses deck each purple vale,
And scents ambrosial breathe in every gale:
Far hence are banish'd vapours, spleen, and tears,
Tea, scandal, ivory teeth, and languid airs:
No pug, nor favourite cupid there enjoys
The balmy kiss, for which poor Thyrsis dies:
Form'd to delight, they use no foreign arms,
Nor torturing whalebones pinch them into charms;
No conscious blushes there their cheeks inflame,
For those who feel no guilt can know no shame;
Unfaded still their former charms they shew,
Around them pleasures wait, and joys for ever new.
But cruel virgins meet severer fates;
Expell'd and exiled from the blissful seats,
To dismal realms, and regions void of peace,
Where furies ever howl, and serpents hiss.
O'er the sad plains perpetual tempests sigh,
And pois'nous vapours, black'ning all the sky,
With livid hue the fairest face o'ercast,
And every beauty withers at the blast:
Where'er they fly their lovers' ghosts pursue,
Inflicting all those ills which once they knew;
Vexation, Fury, Jealousy, Despair,
Vex ev'ry eye, and every bosom tear;
Their foul deformities by all descried,
No maid to flatter, and no paint to hide.
Then melt, ye fair, while crowds around you sigh,
Nor let disdain sit low'ring in your eye;
With pity soften every awful grace,
And beauty smile auspicious in each face;
To ease their pains exert your milder power,
So shall you guiltless reign, and all mankind adore.

No. II.

[TRANSLATION (attributed to Mr. Jackson of Canterbury) of the Ode AD URBANUM, substituted as shorter and better than the translation by an anonymous correspondent, given by Mr. BOSWELL.—*referred to in p. 84.*

URBAN, whom neither toil profound,
Fatigues, nor calumnies o'erthrow,
The wreath, thy learned brows around
Still grows, and will for ever grow.

Of rivals let no cares infest,
Of what they threaten or prepare;
Blest in thyself, thy projects blest,
Thy hours still let the muses share.

The leaden shafts which folly throws,
In silent dignity despise:
Superior o'er opposing foes,
Thy vigorous diligence shall rise.

Exert thy strength, each vain design,
Each rival soon shalt thou disdain;
Arise, for see thy task to join,
Approach the muses' fav'ring train.

How grateful to each muse the page,
Where grave with sprightly themes are join'd;
And useful levities engage,
And recreate the wearied mind.

Thus the pale violet to the rose
Adds beauty 'midst the garland's dies;
And thus the changeful rainbow throws
Its varied splendours o'er the skies.]

No. III.

[THE following complete list of THE CLUB (*referred to in p.* 402), with the dates of the elections of all the members, and of the deaths of those deceased, from its foundation to the present times, and the observations prefixed and annexed, have been obligingly furnished to the editor by Mr. Hatchett, the present treasurer.

"THE CLUB was founded in 1764, by Sir Joshua Reynolds and Dr. Samuel Johnson, and for some years met on Monday evenings. In 1772 the day of meeting was changed to Friday; and about that time, instead of supping they agreed to dine together once in every fortnight during the sitting of parliament.

"In 1773, the Club, which soon after its foundation consisted of twelve members, was enlarged to twenty; March 11, 1777, to twenty-six; November 27, 1778, to thirty; May 9, 1780, to thirty-five; and it was then resolved that it never should exceed forty.

"It met originally at the Turk's-head, in Gerrard-street, and continued to meet there till 1783, when their landlord died, and the house was soon afterwards shut up. They then removed to Prince's, in Sackville-street; and on his house being soon afterwards shut up, they removed to Baxter's, which afterwards became Thomas's, in Dover-street. In January, 1792, they removed to Parsloe's, in St. James's-street; and, on February 26, 1799, to the Thatched-house in the same street.

"From the original foundation to this time, the total number of members is one hundred and two. *Esto perpetua.* "C. H.

"Belle Vue House, Chelsea, July 10, 1829."

Original.	*Members.*	*Died.*	
1.—1764 . . .	Sir Joshua Reynolds . . .	Feb. 23,	1792.
2.—	Dr. Samuel Johnson . . .	Dec. 13,	1784.
3.—	Rt. Hon. Edmund Burke . .	Jul. 9,	1797.
4.—	Christopher Nugent, M. D. .	Nov. 12,	1775.
5.—	Bennet Langton, Esq. . .	Dec. 18,	1801.
6.—	Topham Beauclerck, Esq. . .	Mar. 11,	1780.
7.—	Oliver Goldsmith, M. D. . .	Apr. 4,	1774.
8.—	Anthony Chamier, Esq. . .	Oct. 12,	1780.
9.—	Sir John Hawkins, who soon withdrew	May 21,	1789.

Elected.	*Members.*	*Died.*	
10.—1764 . . .	Samuel Dyer, Esq.	Sep. 14,	1772.
11.—1765 . . .	Dr. Thomas Percy, Bishop of Dromore	Sep. 30,	1811.
12.—1765 . . .	Sir Robert Chambers . . .	May 9,	1803.
13.—1768, Mar.	George Colman, Esq. . . .	Aug. 14,	1794.
14.—1773, Mar.	Earl of Charlemont	Aug. 4,	1799.
15.—1773, Mar.	David Garrick, Esq. . . .	Jan. 20,	1779.
16.—1773, Apr. 2.	Sir William Jones	Apr. 17,	1794.
17.—1773 . . .	Agmondesham Vesey, Esq. . .	Aug. 11,	1785.
18.—1773, Apr. 30.	James Boswell, Esq. . . .	May 19,	1795.
19.—1774, Feb.	Rt. Hon. Charles James Fox .	Sep. 13,	1806.
20.— . . Feb.	Sir Charles Bunbury, Bart. .	Mar. 31,	1821.
21.— . . Feb.	Dr. George Fordyce . . .	May 27,	1802.
22.— . . Mar. 4.	George Steevens, Esq. . . .	Jan. 22,	1800.
23.—	Edward Gibbon, Esq. . . .	Jan. 20,	1794.
24.—1775, Dec. .	Adam Smith, Esq.	Jul. 17,	1790.
25.—	Dr. Thomas Bernard, Bishop of Limerick	Jul. 7,	1806.
26.—1777, Jan.	Rev. Dr. Joseph Warton . .	Feb. 23,	1800.
27.— . . Mar.	Richard Brinsley Sheridan, Esq. .	Jul. 7,	1816.
28.—	Earl of Upper Ossory . . .	Feb. 1,	1818.
29.—	Rt. Rev. Dr. Richard Marley, Bishop of Waterford . .	Jul. 2,	1802.
30.—	John Dunning, Lord Ashburton .	Aug. 28,	1783.
31.—1778, Dec. .	Rt. Hon. Sir Joseph Banks, P.R.S.	Jun. 19,	1820.
32.—	Rt. Hon. William Windham .	Jun. 4,	1810.
33.—	Rt. Hon. Sir William Scott, Lord Stowell		
34.—	The Earl Spencer		
35.—1780, Nov. .	Dr. J. Shipley, Bishop of St. Asaph	Dec. 9,	1788.
36.—1782, Jan. 22.	Lord Eliot	Feb. 17,	1804.
37.— . . Feb. 5.	Edmond Malone, Esq. . . .	May 25,	1812.
38.— . . Mar. 5.	Rev. Thomas Warton . . .	May 21,	1790.
39.— . . Apr. 2.	The Earl of Lucan	Mar. 29,	1799.
40.— . . Apr. 16.	Richard Burke, Esq. . . .	Aug. 2,	1794.
41.—1784, Feb. 10.	Sir William Hamilton . . .	Apr. 6,	1803.
42.— . . Feb.	Viscount Palmerston . . .	Apr. 16,	1802.
43.— . . Feb. 17.	Charles Burney, Mus. D. . .	Apr. 12,	1814.
44.— . . Dec. 23.	Richard Warren, M.D. . . .	Jun. 22,	1797.
45.—1786, May 9.	The Earl of Macartney . . .	Mar. 31,	1806.
46.—1788, Dec. 22.	John Courtenay, Esq. . . .	Mar. 24,	1816.
47.—1792, Mar. 27.	Dr. J. Hinchcliffe, Bishop of Peterborough	Jan. 11,	1794.
48.— . . May 8.	Duke of Leeds	Jan. 31,	1799.
49.— . . May 22.	Dr. John Douglas, Bishop of Salisbury	May 19,	1807.
50.—1794, Mar. 18.	Sir Charles Blagden . . .	Mar. 27,	1820.

Elected.	*Members.*	*Died.*	
51.—1795, Jan. 23.	Major Rennell		
52.— . . Feb. 3.	Rev. Dr. Richard Farmer	Sep. 8,	1797.
53 — . . Jun. 9.	The Marquess of Bath	Nov. 20,	1796.
54.—1797, Jan. 21.	Frederick North, Earl of Guilford	Oct. 14,	1827.
55.—1799, Feb. 12.	The Rt. Hon. George Canning	Aug. 8,	1827.
56.— . . Feb. 26.	William Marsden, Esq.		
57.—1800, Feb. 4.	Rt. Hon. John Hookham Frere		
58.— . . Mar. 4.	Rt. Hon. Thomas Grenville		
59.— . . Mar. 18.	Dr. Vincent, Dean of Westminster	Dec. 21,	1815.
60.—1800, Jun. 10.	William Lock, jun. Esq.		
61.—1801, Mar 17.	George Ellis, Esq.	Apr. 10,	1815.
62.—1802, Dec. 7.	Gilbert Lord Minto	Jun. 24,	1814.
63.— . . Dec. 21.	Dr. French Lawrence	Feb. 27,	1809.
64.—1803, Jan. 25.	Rt. Hon. Sir William Grant		
65.— . . Feb. 28.	Sir George Staunton, Bart.		
66.—1804 Mar. 20.	Dr. S. Horsley, Bishop of St. Asaph	Oct. 4,	1806.
67.—1806, Jan. 21.	Charles Wilkins, Esq.		
68.— . . May 13.	Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. Drummond	Mar. 29,	1828.
69.— . . May 27.	Sir Henry Halford, Bart.		
70.—1808, Mar. 22.	Sir H. C. Englefield, Bart.	Mar. 21,	1822.
71.— . . May 3.	The Lord Holland		
72.— . . May 31.	The Earl of Aberdeen		
73.—1809, Feb. 21.	Charles Hatchett, Esq.		
74.— . . Mar. 7.	Rt. Hon. Charles Vaughan		
75.— . . Mar. 21.	Sir Humphry Davy, Bart.	May 29,	1829.
76.—1810, Feb. 27.	The Rev. Dr. Charles Burney	Dec. 28,	1817.
77.—1811, Jun. 4.	Sir William Gell		
78.—1813, Mar. 2.	Rt. Hon. William Elliot	Oct. 26,	1818.
79.— . . Mar. 2.	Richard Heber, Esq.		
80.—1814, Jun. 7.	Thomas Phillips, Esq. R. A.		
81.— . . Jul. 19.	Rt. Hon. Sir James Mackintosh		
82.— . . Aug. 2.	Lord Chief Justice Gibbs	Feb. 8,	1820.
83.—1815, Feb. 21.	The Marquess of Lansdowne		
84.— . . Apr. 4.	The Lord Lyttelton		
85.—1816, Mar. 26.	Dr. Wm. Howley, Bishop of London *		
86.—1817, Apr. 8.	Roger Wilbraham, Esq.	Jan. 6,	1829.
87.—1818, Jan. 27.	The Lord Glenbervie	May 2,	1823.
88.— . . Apr. 7.	Dr. William Hyde Wollaston	Dec. 22,	1828.
89.— . . Apr. 21.	Sir Walter Scott, Bart.		
90.—1820, Jan. 25.	The Earl of Liverpool	Dec. 4,	1828.
91.—	Charles Butler, Esq.		
92.—1821, Mar. 20.	Dr. C. J. Blomfield, Bishop of London		

* Dr. William Howley withdrew from the club on becoming Archbishop of Canterbury Feb. 1829.

Elected.	*Members.*	*Died.*
93.—1822, Apr. 16.	Rt. Hon. W. C. Plunket, Lord Plunket	
94.—1823, May 27.	Francis Chantrey, Esq. R.A.	
95.—	Henry Hallam, Esq.	
96.—1826, Dec. 12.	Sir Thomas Lawrence, P.R.A.	
97.—1828, May 6.	Lieut.-Col. W. M. Leake	
98.— May 20.	Thomas Young, M.D.	May 10, 1829.
99.—	Rev. William Buckland, D.D.	
100.—1829, Apr. 7.	J. N. Fazakerley, Esq.	
101.—	Dr. Edward Copleston, Bishop of Llandaff	
102.—1829, May 19.	Davies Gilbert, Esq. P.R.S.	

THE CLUB, as it stood, 10th JULY, 1829.

The Earl of Aberdeen, P.S.A.
Rev. Dr. Buckland.
Charles Butler, Esq.
Francis Chantrey, Esq.
J. N. Fazakerley, Esq.
The Rt. Hon. John Hookham Frere.
Sir William Gell.
Davies Gilbert, Esq., P.R.S.
Rt. Hon. Sir William Grant.
Rt. Hon. Thomas Grenville.
Sir Henry Halford, Bart.
Henry Hallam, Esq.
Charles Hatchett, Esq.
Richard Heber, Esq.
Lord Holland.
The Bishop of Llandaff (Dr. Copleston).

The Marquis of Lansdowne.
Sir Thomas Lawrence, P. R. A.
Lieut. Col. Leake.
William Lock, Esq.
The Bishop of London (Dr. C. J. Blomfield).
Lord Lyttelton.
Rt. Hon. Sir James Mackintosh.
William Marsden.
Thomas Phillips, Esq. R. A.
Lord Plunket.
Major Rennell.
Sir Walter Scott, Bart.
The Earl Spencer.
Sir George Staunton, Bart.
Lord Stowell (senior member of the club).
The Rt. Hon. Charles Vaughan.
Charles Wilkins, Esq.

At the meetings of the club the chair is taken in rotation by the members, according to the alphabetical arrangement of their names; the only permanent officer being the treasurer.

Mr. Malone was the first treasurer; and upon his decease, in 1812, Sir Henry Charles Englefield was elected to that office, which, however, on account of weakness of sight, he resigned in 1814; when the Rev. Dr. Charles Burney was chosen, and continued to be treasurer until his death, which took place in December, 1817; and on the 10th of March, 1818, Mr. Hatchett, the present treasurer, was elected.]

END OF VOL. I.

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